The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LIV NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 1928 NUMBER 698

Contents

The Week 255

Editorials

A Back Door to the League? 257
How Muscle Shoals Stands 259
Parenthood: Art or Science? 260

General Articles

The Paradox of Peace ..... R. G. Tugwell 262
St. Louis ..... Marquis W. Childs 267
Scarcely Spring (verse) ..... Louis Untermeyer 270
Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 270
Pedigreed Patriots 271
American Laboratory Theater ..... Stark Young 272

Correspondence 273

Reviews of Books

Germany Ten Years After ..... George Young 275
Scrap-Baskets ..... T. S. Matthews 276
"Art of the Night" ..... Harold E. Clurman 277
A Defense of the Occident ..... William Troy 277
Style and Fashion ..... Malcolm Cowley 278
Recent Fiction 279

The Week

AS THE new revelations in the oil scandal grow worse and worse, the Republican party has begun to revert to the tactics it used at the time when Senator Walsh was first digging out the truth about the bribery of Fall, and Senator Wheeler was revealing the operations of the Ohio Gang in and around the Department of Justice. The G. O. P. has been trying with all its might to pass along some of the blame to the Democrats; and as this effort has failed, it has reverted to the charge that the present inquiry is not being conducted in accordance with the rules of the Book of Etiquette. The New York Herald Tribune, the unofficial journalistic spokesman for the Coolidge administration, has lately begun to talk in these terms, deploring the tactics of the investigators—as though these were of any importance compared to the facts of corruption! Martin W. Littleton, counsel for Sinclair and once a Democrat himself, has taken the same line. Littleton told the judge and jury at his client's previous trial that "Sinclair had no interest in the Continental Trading Company, Ltd. He had never had a bond which the Continental Trading Company distributed. It will be made clear that he never passed a bond of the character mentioned here, or anything else. It will be made clear that he was never the owner of the bonds of the description mentioned here, and that he never passed the bonds to Fall, or anybody on behalf of Fall." All these statements (presumably made by Mr. Littleton in good faith) are now admitted to be false; and when Senator Walsh courteously and with perfect propriety suggested to Mr. Littleton that after being so deceived by his client he might well withdraw from the case, Mr. Littleton responded with a denunciation—of whom? Of Sinclair? No, of Senator Walsh and the other members of his committee, as a group of "Meddlesome Matties."

THE Republicans have, of course, two lines of conduct open. They can admit the corruption of the Harding period (corruption which has now been twice confirmed by the United States Supreme Court, and indirectly a third time when it refused to review the case of Colonel Thomas W. Miller) and promise reformation; or they can keep silent as to the proved facts, and try to cloud the issue in the minds of the voters by abusing the Democrats and the Senate Committee, perhaps even stooping so low as to join Mr. Fred R. Marvin, of the Key Men of America, in explaining that the whole oil scandal is the result of "a gigantic international conspiracy . . . of the internationalists, or shall we call them socialists and communists?" Up to the present, the course the Republicans have followed has been the second; our Washington correspondent believes it is the one they intend to pursue, and that they have a chance of being successful with it. But if that is true, how can men of personal integrity, men like Mr. Hughes, Mr. Root and Mr. Hoover, continue to associate themselves with a party which shows itself so devoid of any sense of moral responsibility? Can the last named, in particular, stomach being the presidential candidate in a campaign based on such conduct? We refuse to believe it until we are forced to.

NOW that it is clear that federal tax receipts for the current year will not run much, if any, above

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

those of 1927, the administration is wisely attempting to hold down tax reduction to, at most, $225,000,000. The Democrats in Congress are recklessly attempting to curry favor with business interests and lay up trouble for a possible future administration of their own party by favoring a larger reduction in the corporation tax and a total cut of $300,000,000. The question is, however, whether even the Republican cut is justifiable. The bill for Mississippi flood control is highly necessary, and cannot justly lay upon the affected states much of the burden. Agricultural relief carries a big appropriation which, while it ostensibly is in the form of a "revolving fund," may not in fact revolve. In addition, the administration itself is favorable toward two expensive measures—the navy bill, and the bill to subsidize privately built and operated merchant vessels by loans at low interest rates and special mail contracts. The former may, unfortunately, be necessary as a result of failure to agree with Great Britain on cruiser limitation; the latter is of doubtful benefit to anyone except the ship builders and operators. Certainly it does not comport well with a program of economy, and is wholly defenseless while the administration is crippling dozens of federal projects and services of unquestioned public usefulness.

ONE feature of the administration's tax program is shameless in the extreme. This is the attempt, with the support of a Secretary of the Treasury who is one of the richest men in the country, to abolish the very moderate federal estate-tax. A graduated estate-tax is admitted by virtually all economists to be one of the most just and logical taxes which can be devised. So strong is the argument for it that the advocates of its repeal have had to resort to deception. They pretend, for instance, that the federal government ought to relinquish this source of revenue to the several states. Yet as a matter of fact, under the present law, all inheritance taxes payable to any state may be credited on the federal tax up to 80 percent of the levy, while, if there were no federal tax, the payment of any such levy might easily be avoided by rich men who could establish personal corporations domiciled in a state which has no such tax. Secretary Mellon is not only guilty of this deceptive argument, but also of a gross underestimate of the amount which the government would lose by repealing the tax. His statement that repeal would cost only $2,000,000 this year (all his other estimates are based on the fiscal year ending June 30, 1929 and thereafter) is accounted for by the fact that the new revenue bill will not go into force until June and will have only a month or less to run before the end of the fiscal year of 1928. As a matter of fact, the tax brought in $100,000,000 in the fiscal year of 1927, will bring in about $81,500,000 this year, and $63,000,000 in 1929. President Coolidge, too, has participated in the conspiracy to end the tax, by removing Chairman William Green of the House Ways and Means Committee, a vigorous opponent of repeal, by appointment to the U. S. Court of Claims.

IF Senator Wagner's remarks about possible control of the coal industry indicate the sense of the committee which has been investigating the strike, or Al Smith's policy if he should become President, we are in for hopeful developments. Mr. Wagner proposes three main measures: one to exempt coal operators from the laws against combination, one to establish regulation for the industry similar to that exercised over the railroads by the Interstate Commerce Commission, and one to safeguard the civil rights of the workers against such abuses as have been common in the coal fields. He believes that laws to accomplish these ends can be devised which will be both effective and constitutional; in order to make sure that they are so, he wants to frame them with the aid of economic and legal experts. All this represents good sense and courage; we hope it will come to something. Particularly pertinent are the Senator's remarks assailing the operators who have obtained federal injunctions against the strikers on the ground that mining is interstate commerce, and then have turned about and argued to the Committee that the industry is not subject to federal regulation—or even to close federal inquiry—because it is not engaged in interstate commerce. Surely the highest legal talent the operators can engage will find difficulty in supporting both these propositions at once.

ABANDONMENT by the British government of the Stevenson plan of restricting rubber exports from British colonies in order to maintain the price is not an admission that it is impossible to exert control over the "natural laws of demand and supply." The plan as originally conceived would have included the Dutch growers also, but since they would not coöperate, it was adopted as an emergency measure to prevent the bankruptcy of highly essential plantations. It served its purpose, but as years went by, the natural result of restriction of the British product was to enlarge the share of the market held by the Dutch, and to stimulate potential American competition. The immediate consequence of the abolition will, no doubt, be falling prices and the elimination of the weaker competitors. But there are signs that this will be followed by mergers, affecting the Dutch as well as the British, which will substitute private control over the supply for government control, and will be, because of their greater inclusiveness, more permanently effective. In this, as in most other fields of production, the tendency is bound to be toward monopoly control in order to regularize production and profits. The remaining, and increasingly important problem, is to institute control of the monopoly in the interest of the consumer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FROM China comes familiar yet terrible news. In western Shantung, and to some extent in three other provinces, famine conditions have reappeared, the result primarily, we are told, of three years' drought, and secondarily of civil war. Half a million persons are already starving, and four million more will be added to that number during the next two months unless relief is provided. Nine-tenths of the people are already eating "food substitutes" of an injurious sort. Children are being sold by their parents, partly because the money they bring will buy food for those who are left, partly because the number of mouths to be fed is thereby reduced. A six-year-old boy now sells for the equivalent of five American dollars. The small relief funds of the foreign missionary organizations are exhausted; the Nationalist government has voted $600,000 for relief in Kiangsu province, but this is only a small part of what is needed.

THE United States will, of course, do its share, as it did in the great famine of 1920-21, which this one threatens to exceed. It will undoubtedly need to come to the rescue many more times in the future; for famine in China is not a natural but a human phenomenon. Drought aggravates the difficulty, but the results of drought could be met locally without much trouble were it not for the fact that China is desperately overpopulated. The number of people so far outruns the food supply that many millions go through life in a half-starved condition and die in old age hardly ever having had a full meal. Famine-relief workers know that they do not dare go into the market and buy food for the afflicted areas: if they do, the price is pushed up beyond the reach of many others, and the action may cost as many lives as it saves. As Henry Kittredge Norton has said, "China is like a huge raft crowded far beyond its capacity with shipwrecked human beings. Many are swimming about in the water, but for each one pulled aboard on one side someone else is pushed off on the other side. The raft will hold no more." And Professor Edward A. Ross adds, "We hear of huge famines resulting from flood or drought, without realizing that every day in China thousands die from starvation. The Chinese contemplate the phenomenon with philosophic calm, for they are used to it and recognize it as nature's method of bringing mouths and food into balance."

FOR this situation there is no present remedy. The only alternative is artificial restriction of population, and not for generations will China be ready for such an innovation. The country's economic system is founded on the family; despite the disastrous results of reckless breeding, any one home without growing children, who can work for it, is handicapped in the struggle for existence. For social and religious reasons, every man wants sons to help him in his old age and to do reverence to his memory when he is dead. When the industrial revolution has run its course in China, things may be ordered otherwise; but in the meantime, the people starve.

AN INTERESTING and important legal point is involved in a case recently decided in New York State. Warden Edgar S. Jennings of Auburn Prison has been found guilty of civil contempt of court, for disregarding an order directing him to release a convict named Benny Sabatino. Jennings has been fined $250, and ordered also to pay Sabatino damages of $1,250. In 1924, Sabatino was sentenced to sixteen years in prison, and immediately thereafter was the subject of two actions. Governor Smith paroled him, and almost simultaneously, a court order of *habeas corpus* was issued on his behalf. He was freed under the parole and not under the writ, and three years later was rearrested as a violator of parole. Thereupon he obtained a new writ of *habeas corpus,* on the ground—subsequently upheld by judicial decision—that an order of the Governor does not take precedence over the writ of a court. When this new writ was dismissed, he appealed his case and won it. In the meantime, the warden of Auburn kept him in prison for several months, on advice of counsel, and only released him when finally ordered to do so by the Court of Appeals. The New Republic has no interest in the fate of Sabatino, but it is very much concerned for the safety of the writ of *habeas corpus,* which would certainly have been seriously impaired in New York State if Warden Jennings had been allowed to go unpunished for his deliberate refusal, over a period of months, to respect such an order of the court.

A Back Door to the League?

WITHIN the past week France and the United States have sent to the other chief powers copies of their recent correspondence on a proposed treaty to "outlaw war." In view of the fact that only a month or two ago France was protesting that the suggested arrangement could not be extended to any other nation than the United States, the fact is one of historic significance. The change in the French attitude, indicated in the terms of the latest Briand note, is partly due to the realization that she must put her best foot forward in a debate conducted before the eyes of the world, and partly the result of strong influence brought to bear, behind the scenes, by Great Britain and even by the late enemy, Germany. These countries, and particularly the first named, are most eager that France should not permit the negotiation with the United States to break down if it can possibly be avoided. This is not because they attach any great importance to the proposed treaty, in and of itself. They regard it as the expression of a pious hope and not much more, similar to the preamble of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

recently-signed Franco-American arbitration treaty, and to dozens of other international documents. They feel, however, that if the new multilateral renunciation of war were to be put into effect, it might offer a loophole of escape from one of the most serious problems by which the League of Nations is confronted.

When the Geneva institution was young, much was heard about the concept of "a League with teeth," perhaps even with an international army of its own which should act the part of a policeman in maintaining peaceful relations, at any rate among the lesser powers. This concept soon faded away and no more is any longer heard of it, even from the most fanatical pro-Leaguer. Instead, the concept has grown up that the League is chiefly a meeting place, where disputes may be discussed in a friendly international atmosphere. It is often assumed that Articles 10 and 16 of the Covenant require the members to join in a League war, but this is not the case so far as furnishing troops and engaging in hostilities is concerned. In each instance, qualifying clauses are used which permit every nation to decide for itself how and to what extent it would participate in such activities. France pleaded her engagements under the League as a reason why she could not sign a multilateral treaty renouncing war, but it was plain that she was in fact more seriously concerned about her alliances with Poland and Jugoslavia and the other members of the Little Entente, agreements which differ in no important particular from the type of alliances existing in Europe prior to 1914. The League itself will declare no wars. Its members may as individuals be forced into war as a result of an action which it rules is an aggressive one; but the League's own work will consist only of an economic boycott, of which the chief part would be a blockade. If the geographical situation permitted —and it is invariably assumed that it would—this blockade would be naval in character, and undertaken by the British fleet.

One of the solid rocks on which British foreign policy is at present based, is the maintenance of friendship with the United States; and as soon as such a blockade is considered, the danger of conflict with America becomes apparent. Suppose we were to insist on the preservation of our right, as a neutral, to trade with a power which was thus being blockaded by Great Britain on behalf of the League? The situation would then approximate that which existed from 1914 until the time we entered the Great War in 1917. During that period, the United States tried to maintain its commerce with Holland and the Scandinavian countries, and Great Britain interfered with this effort to the utmost extent within her ability, on the ground that goods consigned to these countries were in fact intended for reëxport to Germany. As the diplomatic correspondence recently published by our State Department has revealed, the situation between the two countries was of the most serious character possible. If the Germans had not decided to risk all on unrestricted submarine warfare, thus giving us a grievance even more serious than the one we had against Great Britain, there is no telling what the outcome might have been. Therefore, Great Britain is firmly resolved not to undertake a League blockade to which the United States is opposed. In the past year or so, she has made repeated efforts to ascertain whether we could be induced to agree not to exercise our rights, as a neutral, to trade with a country thus penalized; but every such effort has been rebuffed, our statesmen insisting that we must retain complete freedom of action in this regard, and particularly so since it is possible that the League might invoke a blockade against a power which we regarded as being in the right.

Suppose, however, that Mr. Kellogg's multilateral treaty renouncing all war were in effect. Suppose that one of the powers should go to war in defiance of the League covenant. The same power would have signed the Kellogg treaty, since it is a stipulation of France that every power must adhere to it, and since, with the chief nations in the agreement, the lesser ones would tumble over themselves in their eagerness to take advantage of its provisions. Therefore, any power which violated the League covenant would certainly be guilty as well of violating the multilateral treaty. The United States would, of course, insist upon reserving full right of action in such a case. She would remain the sole judge as to whether, so far as she was concerned, the treaty had been violated. It is hard to believe, however, that an act which seemed to the League members to be one of war would not seem the same to the United States. One of the points in the French proposal is that an act of war on the part of any nation must result in the abrogation of the treaty's obligations as between that power and each of the others, individually. This proposal originated with Senator Borah, and is therefore, in all probability, acceptable to Secretary Kellogg. As soon, therefore, as any power simultaneously violated the "outlawry" treaty and the Covenant of the League, the League nations would be free to take such action as seemed to them desirable—as they are now. But this enormous difference would exist: that the United States would be morally, if not legally, implicated in their actions, for her own treaty would also have been violated. It is not at all improbable that in such circumstances she would come to the aid of the League in the application of economic sanctions to the transgressor; but even if she did not, she would certainly be unlikely to object when those measures were taken by others; and specifically, she would hardly be likely to protest if a blockade by the British fleet interfered with her own right as a neutral, to trade with the power which was under discipline. It is no wonder that Europeans are beginning to suggest that the Briand-Kellogg negotiations are leading the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

United States into the League by the back door!

There are, to be sure, grave difficulties in the way. For one thing, would the United States accept such a treaty? Senator Borah, formerly an irreconcilable, is now an ardent supporter of the Briand proposal. He takes for granted the acceptability of the document; and has stated it as his judgment, in a recent interview with Kirby Page, published in the New York Times, that the United States would certainly coöperate with the European nations in punishing a nation guilty of violating the anti-war treaty. But it is not certain that his fellow Senators would agree with him, even to the extent of ratifying the treaty. It is also possible, as we have already suggested, that any particular act of aggression on the part of some one nation might be such as would enlist the profound moral sympathies of the American people, and cause us to refuse to coöperate with the League in disciplinary measures. All that can be done, however, in looking at the future is to consider what is most likely; and both these contingencies, while possible, appear improbable. It seems more likely that the forces in favor of "the outlawry of war," in general, would be strong enough to obtain ratification of a treaty which, to Americans generally, would look to be no more than the expression of a pious aspiration. It also seems likely that any case of aggression sufficiently clear-cut to enlist the League against the offender would also appear black enough to incur the disapprobation of the people of the United States.

Europe, at any rate, thinks the likelihood in this direction is strong enough to warrant every possible effort to find some means of agreement with Mr. Kellogg. The British are wisely assuming an attitude of indifference, being well aware that eagerness on their part would be the one thing likely to do the proposal most harm in the United States; but the negotiations will not be permitted to break down if that can possibly be avoided.

How Muscle Shoals Stands

SINCE the defeat of Senator Walsh's resolution for investigation of the power industry by a senatorial committee, the two remaining power issues before this Congress of first-rate importance have been the disposal of Muscle Shoals and the building of Boulder Canyon Dam. Both are approaching decision. The next few weeks should tell whether the private-power interests will, by indirection, have their way with these issues also.

Senator Norris, the indefatigable advocate of public operation of Muscle Shoals as a power plant, has been successful in obtaining a favorable vote in the Senate for his bill. Attention has, therefore, been concentrated upon the action of the House in this matter. The House Committee on Military Affairs has reported favorably, not Senator Norris' bill as passed by the Senate, but virtually a new bill, consisting of a long amendment. This amendment also calls for government operation, and is the first Muscle Shoals measure to be favorably reported in the House which does so. Superficially, therefore, it looks as if the issue might easily be settled by keeping this valuable plant in the hands of the public. But there are rumors that the strategy of the private-power interests aims to accomplish the defeat of the Norris bill by putting provisions in the House amendment which cannot be ironed out in conference. This would result in failure to enact any legislation on the subject, while it would not necessitate adverse votes on the floor, on the part of legislators susceptible to the influence of the power lobby who might be embarrassed by such votes in an election year. On this account it is well to look carefully at the provisions of the House amendment.

Certain of the changes are admirable and would, no doubt, be acceptable to Mr. Norris and the Senate conferees. One of these places control of the project in the hands of a governmentally owned corporation with five directors, instead of in the hands of the Secretaries of War and Agriculture, as in the Senate bill. The corporation plan of control is distinctly preferable, and was not included in the new Norris bill because Mr. Norris, as a compromise, proposed this time only a ten years' experiment in government operation.

Another feature of the House bill which is also highly praiseworthy is that it authorizes the construction of a dam on the Clinch River—a tributary of the Tennessee—to be known as Cove Creek Dam. This would tend to regularize the flow of the Tennessee and so aid in flood control; it would also help to convert the spasmodic power now obtainable at Muscle Shoals into what is called "firm" power. Since "firm" or stable power is the only kind that is of much general usefulness, utility companies always have to match up their spasmodic sources with other plants that will be capable of filling in the gaps. A dam at Cove Creek would increase the value of the Muscle Shoals plant immensely. This feature has been found in previous Norris bills, and was omitted from this one only in order to simplify the issue as much as possible.

A great defect of the House bill, however, is that it directs the corporation to operate the plant principally for the production of fertilizer by the cyanamid process—a process for which Nitrate plant No. 2 at the development was originally designed. It has been abundantly and repeatedly testified by competent experts that this process is now obsolete and cannot compete in cost with later processes. These later processes do not require such abundant electric power, and Muscle Shoals is not well located for their operation, so that there is no hope for extensive fertilizer manufacture at Muscle Shoals even by modernizing the plant. In view of the thorough exposition of the fallacy that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the farmers may expect cheap fertilizer from this plant, a proposal of such a nature at this late date is calculated to arouse suspicion. Any farmers' representatives who now advocate it must be either extremely gullible or corrupt. The fertilizer proposal has in the past been advanced as a screen behind which private-power interests have grasped at the government's large investment in Muscle Shoals. What is its function in a bill for government operation of the project? It may be now employed as an excuse for disagreement between the House and the Senate conferees; the House Committee members who refuse to yield on the point may explain that their action was due merely to great love of the farmer, and so obscure the issue. Or, if the bill should be passed with this provision, it may be relied upon to create a deficit and so within a short time demonstrate the "failure" of "government ownership."

Another defect of the House amendment is that, unlike the Norris bill, it does not provide for preference, in the sale of power, to "states, counties and municipalities" over "corporations, partnerships and individuals." At present, the only transmission lines to the property are in the hands of the Alabama Power Company. Whatever economies were made in the generation of power, through operation by the government at cost or at a reasonable profit, would therefore be likely to be absorbed by this private distributing concern, over whose rates to consumers the Muscle Shoals corporation would have no control, unless preference were given to non-profit-making distributing agencies, which might want to tap the power. If no such preference were established by law, a contract might be made with the private company that would safeguard it against competition. Yet the main purpose of keeping Muscle Shoals in the hands of the government is to establish a "measuring rod" by which the performance of the private companies, almost immune as they are to regulatory limitation, may be checked.

What explanation can be offered for a bill from a House committee which in two respects goes even further in Senator Norris' direction than he deemed it prudent to go in this session of Congress, though in two other respects it contains absurdly unsound provisions which he is certain to oppose? Does the House Committee on Military Affairs ostensibly abandon its previous opposition to government operation only because it has produced a measure which it feels sure will fail in conference? A safeguard against such tactics would be proper amendment of the Committee's bill on the floor of the House. The votes of members on such attempts to amend should be carefully watched by the League of Women Voters, labor and all other representatives of the public.

The Swing-Johnson bill for Boulder Dam has again been reported in the Senate, with certain modifications intended to conciliate the states which hitherto have been jealous of the benefits which the project would confer upon California. This bill is defective in that it does not specify government operation of the power plant, but permits the Secretary of the Interior the alternative of leasing it. Even so, the private-power interests oppose it, because government operation is a possibility. The indications are, however, that the power lobby need not exert itself to procure the defeat of the bill; it can use as a cat's-paw Senator Ashurst of Arizona, who promises to filibuster against it because the project will make good use of water which that arid state thinks, some time in the distant future, it might employ to irrigate its deserts. Competent testimony that such irrigation is impracticable from the engineering point of view, and general knowledge that there is no need for the products which the irrigated districts would grow, do not seem to influence the sectional prejudice stubbornly held by Arizona. Therefore the much needed flood control and a highly desirable power project may be obstructed. We can only hope that the ill-advised opposition of Arizona can be overcome, and the issue made clear between those who want a great experiment in publicly operated power and those who are ready to go to any length to prevent it.

Parenthood: Art or Science?

THIS month will see a Parents' Exposition held in New York City—so far as can be learned, the first event of its sort in history. Parents present and potential (and these two classes, when you stop to think of it, include quite a large proportion of the population) will be invited to come and see how the modern father or mother of a child should equip himself to perform his responsibility adequately. Books and periodicals will be on display, laying down the proper rules of conduct for such emergencies as broken collar-bones or frustrated Narcissistic tendencies; experts will be present to lecture and confer on enrichment of curriculum for I. Q.'s of 150 and how to provide proper group contacts for the only child. Jerome K. Jerome once wrote of a man who supposed himself to have so many diseases that an interview with him would entitle any medical student to take his degree forthwith; it may be assumed that a visit to the Parents' Exposition will make every bride and groom better qualified to deal in the proper spirit with future offspring than are the most experienced rule-of-thumb, not to say, rule-of-slipper, parents, like the woman who said she "ought to know how to bring up a baby, she'd buried eleven of 'em."

Is there any other country in the world where such an exposition could or would take place? Perhaps Germany or the Scandinavian countries might be interested; and Russia, of course, could conceivably hold a conference, which would, perhaps, center on the problem of making good little Communists out of the rising generation. In most of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the other countries, parenthood is still thought of as an art to be practised instinctively, and no more to be conned out of a book than love-making—with which, indeed, it has some sort of distant relationship. The upper classes in Europe, as a rule, ignore their children, a process which tends to produce (though never so completely as our cliché-writers believe) the familiar types: in England, the neurotic little Spartan, in France the pale and intelligent potential sensualist, in Italy, the child-Fascist. The lower classes have their children always underfoot, and strive to adjust two incompatible elements by an incessant, more or less genial warfare of kicks and curses, until the offspring are old enough to escape to the more hospitable rigors of the street. It is probably fair to say that only in the United States is it a commonplace for a family to build its whole scheme of existence around its children. In any other land, the news that a father had given up a business position in one city to go to another where the schools are better, would be received with incredulity or a call for the psychopathic squad. The *per capita* output of books, periodicals, daily syndicated articles, lectures and conferences on the care of the child, in the United States, is probably ten times as great as in the rest of the world combined.

This is true, even while the conduct of the average American child remains a byword for badness, right around the world. Every traveler from afar notices, and delights in mentioning to us, in that superior way which travelers affect, the "freshness" of our children, their assumption that they may interrupt our conversation at any time, their casual and instant overruling of all parental decisions as to what is good for them and what is not. The European firmly believes that the typical American child is as bad as the hotel child of any other nationality; and that the American hotel child is something so dreadful that it must be experienced to be believed. Nor are these conditions characteristic merely of the lower middle-class home; the higher the standing in the community, the worse the behavior of the children is likely to be. This is perhaps more true today than ever in the past; for now the "new education" has come along and taught many parents (who perhaps have a little misunderstood the dictum) that they must not thwart the free activity of their children. Therefore we see little Charlie playing with matches amid the gasoline-cans, while his anguished mother remains silently out of sight, wringing her hands, but determined that (if he does not blow himself to pieces) he shall not grow up with any inhibitions which have been started by her saying "Don't." Georgie may take his fireman's hatchet to the grand piano, or indeed, to Uncle Egbert's knee; but he must not be thwarted and thereby caused, thirty years later, to dream of his father as a cake of soap slipping about on the bathroom floor.

If the American anxiety over the welfare of the child is perhaps greater than is wholly justified by the results it has thus far produced, it is at least more appropriate in this country than it would be anywhere else. In no other part of the world has modern industrial civilization been carried so far; and say what one will, this era is the enemy of the child. Life today is increasingly urban, increasingly lived in terms of automobiles and apartment houses, under conditions to which children can only passively submit. Even among persons of a considerable degree of wealth, it grows harder and harder for the child to have his own life outside the boundaries of the adult world, as he once could and still does, at least to a larger extent, in rural communities. There is an amazing parallel between what the most advanced experimental schools try to do for the child, and the life which was lived by the Indian boy or girl in the midst of the tribe, five hundred years ago, before the white man had come. In both cases, the child learns by imitating the activities of the adult, amid a group composed of persons of his own age. The Indian teaching was even more efficient and successful than that of the modern school. It went on constantly, and was taken seriously because on the child's understanding and successful performance of the tasks laid out for him life itself might depend. The reality of this experience, which has existed not only among savages the world over, but to a large degree among peasants in civilized lands, is reproduced inadequately even in the best of the new experimental institutions; and the public schools, through which the rank and file of our future citizens still are sifted, have as yet made hardly any use at all of the new techniques which have lately been not so much invented as rediscovered. In them, the educational process is, on the whole, still appropriate to the world of 1880—or at least, as appropriate as it was fifty years ago. In view of these facts, the Parents' Exposition seems not only a useful enterprise, but one which almost deserves to be called indispensable. The wonder is that we have not had it sooner; and now that it is here we may expect an indefinite series of such affairs stretching into the future.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1928, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK
HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN GEORGE SOULE
EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG R. M. LOVETT

ASSISTANT EDITOR: T. S. MATTHEWS

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK
ALVIN JOHNSON E. C. LINDEMAN ROBERT LITTELL
LEWIS MUMFORD GILBERT SELDES R. G. TUGWELL
LEO WOLMAN ELINOR WYLIE

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Paradox of Peace

I. The Moral Advantages of War.

WAR is seldom given its due; and, as a result, the difficulties of achieving peace are minimized. It would appear from much of our argument for peace that its attainment is extremely simple; only a gesture is needed, a simple one, such, for instance, as mutual agreement among individuals not to fight under any circumstances, or treaties among nations which would outlaw war. Approaches of this sort to the problem arise, perhaps, from a praiseworthy impulse, but also from a mistaken conception of the spread of the relationships in which force may be involved. For that is what war is: the settlement of conflicts by the use of force.

Infusing all our attitudes there is this soft, loose, typically reformist thinking. War is an evil which must be abolished. Therefore we will outlaw it. But the fact is never faced that war is only the *force majeure* which is inevitably involved in conflict; and that conflicts are nearly as costly whether war is involved or not. If we consent to live in a state of conflict, and to organize our social system about this as a principle, we cannot consistently object to the only form of ultimate settlement which we know.

One might point to a dozen major incidents involving the use of force within the last two years which are war in the strictest sense—civil war—and which arise because we consent to active opposed forces as the principle of our organization. For conflict is the literal translation of a word which is held in almost reverential esteem among us: competition. We conceive of competition as furnishing the motive force of the social system, and especially, of course, that part of it which is devoted to economic pursuits. But war—both civil and international—is its concomitant.

"But," someone will say, "disputes which arise in these ways are always arbitrable. It is possible to have conflict and to obtain its good results without the ultimate appeal to destructive force." Perhaps something might, at great length, be worked out along this line. But we ought to recognize very clearly that it requires consent to all the phases of war except final settlement by fighting; also, the institutionalization of arbitral procedure has not, so far, given any great reason for hope. The difficulty with it is that it fails at the critical time simply because, in any conflict which has come to the breaking point, there is present neither the necessary attitude of compromise among the contestants, nor the assurance of rightness in a superior enforcing body to carry its provisions into action. There is, also, it must be recalled, the whole background of unrest, withdrawal, suspicion, even hatred, to be considered. A dispute which has been settled by imposed arbitration has not been settled at all. Force used by a third party is not much better than force used by the two original contestants. The results are not ultimately better, frequently, than those which follow from fighting.

One who consents to conflict, therefore, also consents to war—at least of a sort. The usual bargains between sellers and buyers, between employer and employee, are phases of it. And does not our government, under the charter of the various anti-trust laws, enforce competition upon business? A general casting up of our internal relationships no less than our external ones will reveal a general commitment to the idea of actively opposed interests among social forces as a theory of protection. Each individual, each organization, must be active in his or its own interest, and in that alone, or suffer the penalties which are prescribed for the inefficient in competition. And these penalties are of the same nature as those prescribed for a nation which is defeated in war.

And yet conflicts, even war, are attractive. They must be, since we are so deeply committed to them and protect them so jealously from the encroachments of reformers. What makes them so? Perhaps it is the positive quality of war which is its chief advantage. It is something requiring devotion and sacrifice, supremely ideal, yet using those primitive traits to which suppressed differences, not involving violence, give so little scope. The fortunate conjunction of events in which we can be most virtuous by being most wicked is embraced with passionate intensity. To most of us, especially those who enjoy it vicariously, war represents the culminating glory of existence. A generation which has not had it has only half lived. Of course, to a certain percentage—smaller and smaller as war becomes more organized and the services of supply expand—there comes a vast disillusion; that mud, monotony, and the abysses of fear distinguish it for those most actively concerned, prevents few of us from idealizing it. Armistices are perhaps welcome in the trenches, even in the hearts of bereaved mothers; they seldom are to those not expected to bear the deepest burdens or to suffer the ultimate sorrows. Competition is more charming to judges on the bench than to business men who suffer under its whips.

The use of force possesses these charms, gaining in intensity as the periphery of the struggle is approached—because it comes as something waited for, something legitimately expected. A struggle for which infinite pains have been taken, infinite preparations made, creates a psychological expectancy,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which nothing less than the active use of the prepared agencies will satisfy. An army is intended to fight; a business organization is intended to whip competitors. What could be more normal than the attainment of these intentions?

These are not imaginary considerations. They are obvious facts. War, in spite of our withdrawal from its after-effects, is a positively virtuous act; it is a culmination of our everyday arrangements; it represents what we expect and want. And when it occurs it enlists our sentiments and our wills; it engages in its service the entire activity of men. They give themselves to it with the most generous gesture of their lives. And this is as true of employers fighting against an eight-hour day as it is of soldiers opposed to a national enemy.

The difficulties with peace are, by contrast, obvious. Peace is merely the absence of expected war. It has no virtues or qualities of its own. Its advocates are unwelcome specters at a joyous game. Nothing has led up to it; it has no institutional basis, and there are few advocates of the preliminary reconstruction necessary to its vitalization. It merely exists as a temporary absence of war.

II. The Pattern of a War Economy.

The outbreak of international war is the occasion for the recasting of all institutional arrangements. The value of all purposes and the efficiency of all functions are immediately brought in question. The ruthless overhauling which takes place is likely to provide the opportunity for improvements which experts have for a long time advocated, without result. The general consequence, for the economic structure, is the swift adoption and spread of technical devices and instruments which have been known but have long lain unused because of the relative lethargy of peace.

Of even greater importance, however, than these technical improvements, were, in our war experience, others of a more drastic sort. The very nature of the business system was called in question. Hitherto there had been dissent from its voluntary, free-competitive, profit-seeking operations only by a few economists who were generally considered to be utopian. But between April, 1917, and September, 1918, without any fuss or feathers, a system of control went into operation which amounted to the abrogation of *laissez-faire,* and the adoption of a system which reversed all our accepted tenets of organization. The Food and Fuel Administrations came first; then the War Industries Board; then the Price Fixing Committee and finally, a system of international coöperation among the Allies which went most of the distance toward creating a world economic system. Of the arrangements which had actually been perfected at the time of the Armistice, or were in immediate contemplation, the most notable feature was their coördinated and coöperative nature. In the crisis of the great conflict, lesser conflicts were adjourned. Competition in business, for instance, which is assumed to be the life of our trade, was, for the first time, officially recognized as inefficient and wasteful; and a structure essentially coöperative was substituted for it. But there were longer steps taken, even, than this. For coördination, in a positive sense, was organized from the governmental center with business men serving on the boards of control. Nor was this all. The system of relationships which has grown into our price system is at once so complex and so intimate that, just as a spider's web vibrates throughout at a touch anywhere, so the web of prices vibrates to any disturbance. It followed naturally upon the coördinating activities of the War Industries Board that price controls should be set up to prevent injuries to this web of relationships.

This was going pretty far. But it was done in so practical a fashion and by such hard-headed leaders of industry that even the Supreme Court Justices, usually so zealous in the protection of those interests which have been brought by it under the all-embracing ægis of the Fifth Amendment, were cajoled into its acceptance as what they called a "controlling emergency." One step followed another so simply and naturally, and men's minds were so occupied in other ways, that the noble sentiments of free enterprise enjoyed a long vacation. In their stead we learned to use the words which stand in an antithetical relationship: administration, quota, control. It was seen that the physical capacity of industry to produce goods is different from its capacity to produce profits. For the moment we were agreed that goods were needed—more and more, without limit. But to produce them in quantities which would meet the need, it was necessary that no material, no effort, no power, no plant capacity, should be wasted. And the production of too much of this or too little of that had to be stopped. The ruthlessness with which control-boards demanded increased activity of certain sorts, and the cessation of activity of other sorts, was something for which there was no precedent. The adjourning of a century of economic theory took place almost overnight and by common consent. This was war. And in war these things can happen.

But the conflict basis of industry extends beyond those differences which have to do with the allocating of social effort; it arises even more frequently over the apportionment of the income from production. War brought changes to our system of arrangements in this field which were quite as revolutionary. The determination of wages is by bargaining, each party to the contract trying to give as little and get as much as seems practicable. Differences arise only over the methods of bargaining to be used, not over the question whether there ought to be a bargain. That wages are a part of a national income which is, at any one time, fixed, and that it is possibly better to adjust incomes by some plan, rather than to abandon apportionment to the va-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

garies of higgling, is an idea that only war has ever given an opportunity to be tried. And not only were the wages of labor visualized in this way, but also the returns to capital. Significantly enough, it was found necessary to limit these, either directly through price control, or indirectly through recapture by graduated taxation.

To the use of goods, also, the national scheme was extended. Here compulsions were never drastic, because they did not need to be. All of us found suddenly that we could wear old clothes with satisfaction, and luxuries were foregone as a matter of course. Dietary habits forsook the traditional patterns, and "calorie" became a household word. The expert came into his own in this field just as rapidly as he did in the procedure of production. What was of greatest importance was that we learned to think of using goods not as a final activity, but as contributory to further activity. They suddenly became instruments of life rather than ends in themselves; scales fell away from eyes which had hitherto clung to the vision of furs, limousines and palaces as the chief end of life. The old virtues of plain living and high thinking attained a meaning they had lost in the meretricious activities of wasteful use which had come to characterize prosperous America.

On the whole, it is possible to generalize without any great inaccuracy concerning the social theory which was found useful in a genuinely felt emergency. Never before have such terms as "social," "functional" or "experimental" been applicable to our intentions. But they are needed to explain what happened then. That which was done was "social" because of its selflessness of aim and because of its ability to gather up into a swelling stream of effort all the materials and energies which are usually devoted to the service of individual interests.

Our organization was just as certainly "functional" and "experimental." For a functional state is one in which structures, institutions, laws, are specifically shaped to the work there is to be done. Ordinarily, of course, we accept the reverse conception. We protect the structure, the institution, the law, as things possessing, in themselves, intrinsic values. They are not to serve human purposes; human purposes are devoted to the service of them. They are not instruments, but ends. It takes but a touch of war to change our attitudes toward these things; then we find it quite possible to make the law conform, to adopt the structure of the state to the social will which is roused. It is equally true that at such a time we discover a new willingness to explore sources, regarded hitherto with lazy contempt, for new devices, and to try their possibilities with skeptical indifference to their nature.

Any group freed, in this way, from its self-imposed fetters, is bound to do something startling, something of magnificent proportions. But only war seems able to effect the release, and to call out the reserves of effort we need to accomplish the social purpose. Ten years of such release would bury the earth in splendor—if we could have it without the destructive consequences of force.

III. Post-War Anemia.

The war effort managed to gather to itself the scattered ideas of experts of various kinds which had, so to speak, been lying around loose, unused, even despised; and this extended beyond the obvious realm of technology into that of social organization. There was and is extraordinarily little dissent from the judgment that it worked well. But when peace came most of these arrangements were scrapped. There was common judgment then that a war-economy is one thing and a peace-economy quite another. The patterns for peace were to be discovered in the precedents of peace.

The whole economic organization was handed back to the keeping of competitive forces. Conflict as the method of achieving harmony in social relationships was once more reëstablished. The result has been what all of us can see. We, in our part of the world, have suffered less from the change than other peoples. But what prosperity we have since attained has been rather in spite of the change than because of it. It might be noted, also, that some small part of the wartime coördination has been maintained in a curious left-handed way. The industries which learned the value of common operations during the War did not wholly revert to competition as they were supposed to do. But only the feebleness of our administration of the anti-trust acts permitted it—that and official complaisance where the interests of big business were concerned. But certain disquieting features of the old peace-economy out of which the Great War came have returned full-blown. The war to end war resulted in a peace which seems at least as likely to breed new wars as was the old one.

National armaments, one symptom of this disease, are larger than any peacetime armaments ever were before. The exploitation of small nations was never so flagrant, nor ever carried on with such open jockeying for advantage among the Great Powers. The flow of dubiously secured credits to backward regions never attained so great a volume. The only discernible differences in these matters is that the United States has preëmpted the place of Germany in the challenge to Britain and France for supremacy as an imperial military power.

Simple antithesis to the wartime economy does not adequately explain the economy of peace. We say that competition is an institution with us. And it is true that we depend vitally upon its operation. Yet who would be so naïve as to suggest that it operates very widely in industry—in this age of combination and association? It is, rather, true to say that its principle is invoked as a charter of free exploitation for combinations. These are everywhere supplanting small-scale business—in market-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing and in finance as well as in manufacturing. Competition is rapidly disappearing over large areas of industry, and the combined units are gathering to themselves a power so immense as to be without any precedent in history. And there is nothing to prevent this strength from being used in the exploitation of workers and of consumers; nor to prevent the creeping paralysis of bureaucracy. What we gave up at the end of the War was the right to view our revolutionized industry as a social instrument to be used in the general interest.

One result of this governmental attitude is an indefensible pyramiding of prices by those who have most power over them with a corollary restriction in living standards. Our prosperity is frequently praised, but seldom analyzed. It is deflated considerably by an understanding that 85 percent of Americans live in families whose annual incomes are less than are required to maintain even the "fair level" our social measurements have established. Then there are those other results which always follow. High prices restrict markets; and when this happens there is a feverish search for markets abroad. High profits pile up surpluses, which seek those regions of the earth where investments pay high, if not very certain returns. We are committed in these ways to a peacetime economy which possesses all the elements of war except the final outrage of destruction; but this could follow, easily and normally, from our present attitudes and arrangements.

I think it no exaggeration to say that the whole world is institutionally arranged for war, just as, in 1918, it was expected to be reorganized for a constructive peace. The so-called Peace Conference contributed more, perhaps, than any one conclave in history to the setting up of an inevitable war-situation. The economic forces which were violated and denied there within a few months were the most powerful ones men ever attempted to deflect from their normal courses. And if we add to the delicate balance of conflicts instituted at Versailles the internal patterns of conflict to which each nation reverted, there appears a total picture of incipient war, both civil and international, such as scarcely ever has tormented men before. To this bold and short statement there must, of course, be added several qualifications. But these cannot be discovered without further analysis of the Peace of Versailles. The patterns of war- and peace-economies, within the United States, have already been outlined. These would differ in detail, but not in general, for most of the other participants. The generalization implied in this contrast is that, considered strictly from the point of view of total economic efficiency, the war-arrangements were greatly superior, taking advantage, as they did, of the modern possibilities of coöperation, planning, coördinating and controlling, as well as the technical stimulation of goods production and the reduction of costs, combined with restraints on rising prices. The international pattern has been referred to only in a general way. But what resulted from the armistice discussions was the establishment of the principles of self-determination for small nations, of official hegemony of backward regions by the Great Powers through the mandates device, and a savage punishment of the Central Powers which were defeated.

It is quite clear that the institutionalization of these ideas which followed tended to reëstablish the "balance of conflicts" rather than to substitute for it a possibly more coöperative and coördinative system. For, practically, what happened was that the new nations at once threw up prohibitive tariff barriers which frequently separated raw materials from the industrial regions which were equipped to use them, and even, in some cases, were interposed between such mutually necessary resources as coal and iron. The relations of the Great Powers with the backward regions turned out to be discouragingly little different from those which existed before the War. England, France, Japan and Italy gained what Germany lost. But evidence of better arrangements which would eliminate resorts to violence is completely lacking. France and Italy, England and Russia, have successively come to the very verge of open conflict. The United States has conducted a half-dozen, more or less, military excursions into regions where her honest interests were highly dubious. And so far as the terrible and unreasonable penalties exacted from Germany are concerned, subsequent events themselves have sufficiently established the nature of that item of the Versailles Peace. On that front, remnants of the War still exist in the form of occupation forces. Nor has all the pressure which could be brought to bear on France served to dislodge them. Even as to the famous compromise of the Dawes Plan, economists are far from optimistic; its unworkability cannot much longer be concealed; but even such an open recognition of failure can scarcely result in anything more than a modified arrangement of incipient conflicts. For the Peace failed to establish peace in yet another respect: it left to the nations involved a heritage of debts which, because of their size and the circumstances under which they were contracted, are still, ten years after, one of the sorest spots in international relations—and this quite aside from the costs which were assessed to Germany. If France would like to make Germany pay, the United States is quite as insistent that France pay, and refuses to admit that the one obligation concerns the other. French statesmen who doubtless see, in spite of their official blindness, the difficulties in the way of exacting payments from a nation with a persistent unfavorable balance of trade, have tried to make French debt discharges contingent upon entirely mythical receipts from Germany. We answer with true Yankee logic that, having borrowed without conditions, the French must return our money. No American statesman

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

has volunteered an adequate explanation of how this can be done when we have most of the available gold supply, and refuse—as is evidenced by our tariff structure—to take payment in goods lest our manufacturers suffer.

It will be said, however, that there have been numerous economic conferences; and that, after all, a League of Nations *was* set up, however little scope it may have been allotted in world affairs. These observations are true; and these are the qualifications of which mention has been made. They are, essentially, attempts at modifying a basic international design of conflict.

IV. The Conciliation of Conflict.

In general it may be said that the unofficial economic conferences which have taken place since 1918 have attempted to establish a basis in information for official agreements concerning unliquidated disputes. The official conferences have sought guardedly, and with the constant intrusion of jealous concern for national interests, to prevent disputes from becoming outright war. This is the international conciliatory situation. Within nations the same sort of effort, both public and private, has been generously expended. Conflict is recognized; attempts are made simply to avert its consequences.

This leads to the conclusion—at least, it seems to many writers to lead to the conclusion—that we need, above all, the effort which may be made toward the institutionalization of conciliation. This, more of us would be willing to concede if there were not so many recorded failures to avert the final use of force in all conflicts which are at all serious. For myself, I remain intransigent. If we must have conflict, I agree to war. And not the less so because international war, at least, seems to me to come wearing most of the habiliments of the better sort of peace. Of course, as a practical person who recognizes the disadvantages of forcible settlements, it seems to me a gain whenever what seems like inevitable violence is turned aside and somehow arbitrated. As an entirely unpractical one, devoted to the ideal of peace, however, these arbitrations seem to me to make easier the escape from any thorough-going organization of a functional and coördinated society in which resorts to force are unthinkable because they have been legislated out of existence.

But most of the work which is going on is thoroughly practical. There seems to be a common conspiracy to avoid the unpleasant logic of idealism. Yet within the League—if we view its permanent work rather than its periodic assemblies—and outside it, in the semi-official international economic conferences, some, at least, of the emphasis falls, not only on the institutionalization of arbitral procedure, but also on the preparation of a new Society of Nations. The League defines itself as a "series of engagements freely taken by self-governing nations, each for itself and toward the others, 'in order to promote international coöperation and to achieve international peace security.'" On examination, this will be discovered to mean both kinds of activity to which reference has been made; that which looks to the disestablishment of conflict and that which merely tries to avert its consequences in the use of force. It is, however, only too evident that, both formally and in practice, the scope of operations on the constructive side has been extremely limited.

The same diversity of interests is discernible in the work of the conferences. For instance, this passage is to be discovered in the official report of that of 1927: "The effort to restore Europe's economic position calls for the rationalization of industry and a coördination between the economic efforts of various countries." This is a difficult problem, it is declared, but that a first step toward it would be the attempt to lower tariff barriers all around, set the keynote for the conference. And its main recommendations looked only toward this result. The conference, though it had official membership, had no power beyond that of recommendation to the represented governments. Its effects, if any, are yet to be shown. Like the League in operation, it evidences sufficient knowledge of the destructiveness of conflict. But it touches only one, as the League touches only a few. In fact, though others have been spoken of, only currency and tariffs have been seriously discussed by the conferences since the War. This is perhaps the only practical method of procedure. But one may be forgiven grave doubts whether it will prove sufficiently rapid to avert the next World War.

With the utmost sympathy for all the vast effort in the world which is bent toward conciliation and adjustment of conflict, one must still honestly contrast the heroic temper of war with the hesitations of peace. In peace, it seems, we must confine our attentions to minute, practical, piecemeal reform of the backward social institutions we have inherited; and we must approach solutions with the careful, patient preparation which will overcome the obstinate prejudice of the ignorant and suffering as well as the willful obstruction of the well informed and prosperous. We temporize and compromise, accepting half-portions which appease no appetites; no problem is too small to raise difficulties accounted almost insurmountable; and the least suggestion of far-reaching change rouses fears for remote interests which make even small reforms impossible. All this is different in wartime. No problem, then, is too big to daunt us; we show a ruthless willingness to change; and if this involves the very foundations of the social order, no one worries. Anxiety for results creates an experimental temper which calls everything in question. Nothing is sacred to the war-reformer. And reconstruction is taken in a stride that, in fifty years of peace, would only call out reams of dialectic. The League,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the conferences, are good, I suppose, but they move with terrifying slowness. While we hesitate and compare proposals endlessly with accepted doctrine, it is far from impossible that the conflict of peace may bring upon our timid society another—and a much more terrible—war. These observations I hold to be true; but they raise another vital question. If peace is so "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," why do so many of us work for it so unweariedly? Is it worth the pains we take and the expense to which we go? If war involves peace in all other relations than the one—and a tightening and alertness in the economic organization which is so desirable—why not let it come, if it will, without resistance, and save our money and our pains?

This must be held to be the crux of the whole matter. Hitherto we have considered only the favorable aspects of war. But the liabilities need only to be stated in most casual fashion for us to understand why, even at its best, war can never win reflective consent. We may pass over the results of those civil conflicts to which we have referred. We live continually among these. Let us put into the balance only a casual reference to the Great War's costs. No more is needed. I cite from M. Francis Delaisi a passage concerning losses which, when viewed even with the minimum of sympathy, must bring back to every memory among us the implications of destruction and of sorrow which only center here; there are no measures at the periphery which can bring concretely home the total.

> Imagine a gigantic workyard where fifteen million hands, provided with formidable machinery, are busily employed day and night. Behind them, fifty-five million men are exclusively occupied in manufacturing and transporting all that is necessary for their upkeep, their equipment, their supplies and the renewing of their plant. And behind them the inhabitants of twenty-nine nations reducing their consumption to a minimum (sometimes, even below) and devoting their privations and their savings to feeding this gigantic gang of workers. All the resources of the universe were transported to this workyard where fifteen million men were employed, not in production, but exclusively in the destruction of everything they could lay their hands on, and of themselves.

And to make the picture quite complete, M. Delaisi holds it a simple fact, amply substantiated, that "victory itself missed its objective. . . . The victors were able to retain more or less their political and social system," and the vanquished were not. "But their industries, whose means of production have increased, are confronted with ruined clients and more restricted outlets than in 1914. Their situation, far from having been improved by military success, has been considerably aggravated." This fundamental truth, however, emerges: "it is as impossible to solve an economic problem by firing off guns as it is to mend a watch by slashing at it with a knife."

These are the reasons why we cannot consent to war. They are also the reasons why we cannot consent to the organization of society on a basis of balancing conflicts. Somehow to discover ideals which shall quicken the pulses of men as war does, shall create in them the heroic temper of reconstruction which, until now, only war has been able to induce, shall discover in a constructive program the sources of incentive which are now the exclusive possession of militarism—these are the problems of peace. William James, many years ago, asked for a moral equivalent of war. We might also discover an economic equivalent.

R. G. TUGWELL.

St. Louis

An Old City Learns the New Tricks

IT WAS once very lovely in St. Louis for the descendants of those early French traders who pushed their way aggressively up the Mississippi and took, with the proper dramatic gesture, what they fancied. The city, scarcely a city then, but a town, compact and snug, was their own particular oyster.

They controlled the clubs, the St. Louis Club, the St. Louis Country Club, and the Imperial, a dancing club which had derived from the Home Circle Society. They still controlled certain trade monopolies, and they still retained some hold on certain important real-estate tracts that might some day be very valuable.

Of course, there were the Germans. But the French were separated from this grosser element by the Grand Avenue bridge which marked the boundary of the South Side. And, moreover, it was very easy to be superior to the Germans, who were, after all, only beer-drinking barbarians. The one or two German families that had made money rapidly and largely in various enterprises beneath the notice of the French, such as brewing, seemed content to dominate, in a feudal sort of way, the members of their own race.

As in Boston, where the Cabots still are reputed to speak only to the Lowells, the Cabannes, the Chouteaus, the Papins, the Lucases, the Bertholds and the others whose names were properly Gallic conversed only with themselves or with God. They

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gave their balls and receptions, drove pleasantly about their city in their fiacres and victorias, built their ornate town houses and recognized a social arbiter whose word was law.

Even before the World's Fair in 1904, however, annoying and alarming things had begun to happen. It seemed that there were certain people who did business in an altogether ungentlemanly way. And these unmannerly persons had managed, no one quite knew how, to relieve certain of the French families of their fortunes. They had managed, too, when no one had given them the least encouragement, to start absurd little factories and businesses that somehow prospered amazingly. They even succeeded, two or three of the these newer families—Germans, beer-drinking Germans—in marrying into the French families. And, of course, it was scarcely possible to deny recognition to one of your own kind, even though united to a baser species.

The World's Fair, for the old French, was a kind of final glow of glory. Not wholly an unmixed pleasure, however, for it had been found necessary to invite several of the *nouveaux riches* (this term is used always in a tone of the bitterest disparagement) to participate in the great enterprise that was to stand as a symbol of the St. Louis of the future. But still the French dominated. They received the visiting dignitaries, and they let it be understood that it was their show. The last show, as it proved, that they were to give.

Thereafter things moved with a rapidity that was altogether confusing and disconcerting. The city—their neat, compact little city—began to have growing pains of a serious nature. It spread out, gangling and awkward, far beyond the boundaries they had arbitrarily decided were conceivable for its expansion. It sent tracts of land that they had sold for contemptuously small sums skyrocketting dizzily upward. All sorts of new and impossible people, people whose mothers and grandmothers had been their servants even, began to make money, a great deal of money, in Mexican oil, in tinware, in steel plants and in real estate. These proud French families began to dwindle and melt away. They began to leave the city or they intermarried with the invaders.

The World War was the end. It became necessary to take almost all of the newly rich into the old clubs, merely to keep them in existence. It was a very distressing and unhappy period. For, arriving at last, these newcomers were not content merely to be among those present; they were not content merely to be tolerated. Numerically superior, they proceeded to run the show to their liking. They even began to look down on those who had formerly scorned them from on high. Now, it is said, there is only one family of great wealth definitely excluded from the sacred precincts of the St. Louis Country Club. It is the misfortune of this family to bear a name that stands as a symbol for all that was formerly considered too unspeakably vulgar for words. "And," say the newcomers, "you must draw the line somewhere." Though they are willing to borrow this gentleman's polo ponies and cruise, a little condescendingly, on his yacht, it has been decreed that he must be kept outside the pale forever, perhaps, at least for another generation of well bred penitence, or until it becomes desirable to build a new club-house.

But if the French have passed, surviving only in the names of streets and telephone exchanges and in occasional tough and hardy families, they have inevitably left their stamp. More than one keen observer of the last three decades of the city's growth holds to the theory that, originating as a French trading post, the city has always been just that. That, going from a center for fur trading and the outfitting of western trading expeditions to a jobbing center for the Southwest, it was marked indelibly with the narrow conservativism that such trade implies.

The French, too, fixed the social pattern in a design conservative and withdrawn, a design that excluded almost every interest that did not contribute to the illusion of their own grandeur and importance. It was so easy to laugh at crude and bumptious politicians and dismiss them thus. It is not so easy today. Naturally this narrowly parochial society excluded all civic and municipal interests. For long has St. Louis cried in vain for a philanthropist or many philanthropists. The wealthy have been inveighed against in newspaper editorials and in resounding public addresses—all to no avail. Aloof, indifferent, disdaining even to hear these common pleas, they went off to their country estates, to Florida or the Riviera, and they died in a dignified and superior fashion, willing their closely guarded wealth to their own kind, or to old family servants, and even, in a recent mysterious and outrageous instance, to banks in several remote cities. Whenever its endowment fund is exhausted, the symphony orchestra must go begging, squeaking its violin and twanging its harp on the street corners for enough money to assure three more years of its existence. There is no Eastman, no Ford or Rockefeller to do the business up largely and surely.

Washington University seems the one exception to this general circumstance. In immaculately correct early Gothic architecture, many of the city's great names are emblazoned for all time, Brookings, Cupples, Wilson, Bixby. A little incongruously, a little newly and freshly, the collection of buildings rises from what was not so long ago a rolling, grassy hill. Robert S. Brookings, a hero of the Horatio Alger school, has been the principal "angel" of the University, usually exerting his influence in behalf of the liberal view.

With this one exception, the Horatio Alger heroes seem to have followed, rather closely, the older pattern. But a new generation was not content with this old design. St. Louis, they suddenly seem to have decided, must become a city with all

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the aspects of metropolitanism. There were the disturbing examples of Kansas City, Detroit, Los Angeles, Cleveland and Chicago. The phenomenon of Detroit, increasing miraculously overnight, was particularly distressing. The newer generation of Bixbys, Lamberts and Buschs began to bestir themselves. They discovered great difficulties before them, a rule of political bossism, lethargy and indifference, everywhere indifference. There was no choir of the new Babbitts to sing hosannahs to the city's future. And when something sharp and stringent had to be done to shake the complacent old order to its very roots, they resorted naturally to the most effective methods then in vogue. By means of not inconsiderable sums of money spread about in the most advantageous places, an $87,000,000 bond issue, calling for an imposing array of public improvements, was passed.

Then the change that this newer generation had long hoped for began to come. The city is now in the throes of this process of transition. Whole streets are devastated as though by cyclone and tornado, in the business of making boulevards to relieve the few choked thoroughfares that serve as an outlet for the congested downtown district. Whole blocks of ancient two- and three-story structures are being pulled down to make way for the plaza system about which a number of new municipal buildings will be grouped. The mean and ugly streets about Union Station are also being cleared for a plaza. New buildings are being rudely thrust up against the skyline.

Cultural as well as physical landmarks are giving way. Where the outward evidences of French and German culture have not disappeared altogether, they have become historically formalized. The *Freu Gemeinde,* once the theater of fiery debate by the men of the 1848 movement and their immediate descendants, has become a gathering of venerable graybeards who meet to commemorate anniversaries, or to reminisce sentimentally. The *Schiller Verein* and the *Liederkranz,* at one time culturally significant organizations, have faded like the figures in very old daguerreotypes. The strongest of the survivors, as might logically be expected, is the *Turn Verein.* Beer gardens have given way to road-houses and noisy hotel dining-rooms.

An influx of new industries in the past two decades has brought about a great change throughout the entire city, evident to the average citizen chiefly in the dreary smoke pall that hovers above the city, and to the banks in ever-increasing balances. The smoke is all-encompassing and depressing. On days of fog when there is little wind, it is as dark as midnight in the downtown canyons, until noon or later. The smokiest city in America! That is the one acknowledged distinction that St. Louis has won since the beginning of the industrial renaissance. An allotted number of pounds of soot must find lodging in each citizen's lungs, engineers have computed. Let none be found wanting! The Citizens' Smoke Abatement League has made gestures, through funds raised by public subscription, toward some relief. But with the source of the evil so close at hand in the cheap southern Illinois soft coal, it seems probable that only vigorous municipal action will offer any solution.

The smoke pall was another cause for distress among that group that had regarded St. Louis as its own pleasant little egg. Wherever possible, they retreated beyond the boundaries of the city to establish themselves in Georgian country houses with quaint outbuildings, leaving behind them ornate and ponderous town houses, as an earlier generation had deserted uglier dwellings nearer the heart of the city. Or they became a part of that expensive nomadic tribe who wander the face of the earth, always returning for a month or two in the fall or spring to view, a little wistfully, the changes that God and the newer generation have wrought.

Largely under the tutelage of outsiders, St. Louis is learning to sing the hymns of Babbittry. But a little softly, even a little shyly, as singers who are not yet in full voice. Industrial experts are called in to plan and promote, to allocate and arbitrate. City-plan specialists and airport advisers come to direct the proper destinies of the city that is to be, if wishing and willing can make it come into being. Statistics are chanted. St. Louis now makes more shoes than Boston; 196 new industries have been established in the last six years, bringing the grand total to nearly 4,000 factories; the assessed valuation of property for taxation purposes is $1,974,479,450; building permits totaling $162,705,000, exclusive of bond-issue projects, have been issued in the last two years. More than a half-million people annually attend the Municipal Opera. (It is quite unimportant that the direction of this institution has become so complacent that even the gayest operas are dreary and dull on the Municipal Theater's enormous outdoor stage.) Forest Park is one of the three largest parks in America, containing no less than a zoo, two public golf links, an Art Museum, the Municipal Theater, Jefferson Memorial, tennis courts, bridle paths, and handball courts. There are many bright things for the future, too, figures, facts and fancies that can be set to the newer tunes. The General Electric Company has purchased ground for a plant to employ 25,000 persons. The General Motors Company, the United Drug Company, and the Fisher Auto Body corporation all recently chose St. Louis as the scene of certain future activities. And then there is the promise of a revival of traffic on the upper river held out by the federal barge line, which recently began operations with a consequent bustling optimism, not only in St. Louis but all up and down the river.

But all this would seem to convey the impression that St. Louis threatens imminently to become a second Detroit. This is not so at all. Even the most sanguine Babbitt would concede this fact in a sour moment. The city does not adapt itself

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

readily to the speeding-up process, and even its most blatant boosters are mere shy, whispering schoolboys compared to the noisy prophets of the newer civilization elsewhere. If many of the younger generation, coming of age with their first novel or their first book of verse, grow weary and disgusted and depart for New York or Paris, many who remain are loyal, in a very quiet and unobtrusive way, to a belief that everything is not to be lost in the present chaos. There is much in the past to build upon, in the era dominated by William Marion Reedy and, earlier, by Eugene Field. And then there are occasional phenomena such as the Garden Theater, to which each summer for eight weeks the Goodman players come with an excellent repertoire. There is the Post-Dispatch which, as an example of its policy, probably gave a more complete and thorough presentation of the Sacco-Vanzetti case than any other newspaper in the United States, and consistently and vigorously opposed the execution. And there is reason to be hopeful about any American city in which an excellent beer is still obtainable.

It is, generally speaking, a workaday city. On any Monday morning it goes forth to its labors, a little stiff and sore from too much golf or too much rustic sport along the Meramec River, a playground twenty miles distant from the city, or, if it be winter, with something of a head from too much home-brew or three movies in two days. Devastated streets add to the confusion and the delay, but the hurry is not too great. Black backs are bent over steel and stone. Sodden housemaids of yellow and brown hues jog sleepily out toward tall apartment houses. Factories and wholesale houses, scrofulous with grime and smoke, engulf their daily thousands. ("Too many strangers have come here in recent years," one of the older citizens complains.) The smoke fog settles heavily down. There is comparative quiet, again at noon a roar and grind of noise, and then at night the workers go home. Torpid, brown, unhurried, the river winds by. This is St. Louis.

MARQUIS W. CHILDS.

Scarcely Spring

Nothing is real. The world has lost its edges;
The sky, uncovered, is the one thing clear.
The earth is little more than atmosphere
Where yesterday were rocks and naked ridges.
Nothing is fixed. Tentative rain dislodges
Green upon green or lifts a coral spear
That breaks in blossom, and the hills appear
Too frail to be the stony fruit of ages.

Nothing will keep. Even the heavens waver.
Young larks, whose first thought is to cry aloud,
Have spent their bubble-notes. And here or there
A few slow-hearted boys and girls discover
A moon as insubstantial as a cloud
Painted by air on washed and watery air.

LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

Washington Notes

ALWAYS, it seems to me, someone in politics can be counted upon to spoil a pretty picture by being oversmart, or half-baked. Just when it appears that the ungodly are about to get their just deserts, a way out is invariably opened for them by some "champion of the people," intoxicated by the chance to pose as a guardian of the public weal. Perhaps this is a little rougher introduction to remarks about Senator Gerald P. Nye, Chairman of the Public Lands Committee, generally known as the Teapot Dome Committee, than is justified by the facts—but not much. In my judgment, the recent revelations of corruption by that committee would not have counted heavily in the coming campaign anyhow, but I think it is pretty generally conceded that young Mr. Nye's methods have contributed not a little to take the cutting edge off the disclosures. Of course, he does not mean to have this effect.

There is no question but that the advance publicity, nearly always traceable to Senator Nye, of the plans of the Committee, and the subsequent failure to live up to the promise, have confused the public mind and have a tendency to make people slightly sick of the whole business. It is extremely distasteful to me to say this, because I recognize that disparagement of this Committee is playing squarely into the hands not only of the scoundrels who have been uncovered but of those who have not yet been uncovered but are extremely apprehensive. Yet what else is there to do? Certainly that silly story about bonds being sent through the mail to a federal judge, which turned out to be an absurd mare's nest, did the investigation real harm. It was the worst sort of judgment to let it get publicity, and to talk about revelations that would "rock the country," when there was nothing to reveal. The absurdity of this story made the Committee seem highly ridiculous. It was not, however, as harmful as the effect of sending out to Marion to rummage through the Harding estate again, to see whether the Marion Star had been bought with Continental Bonds or some such thing. In both of these instances, the really harmful thing, so far as the investigation is concerned, was the advance publicity; and for this, unless my information is all wrong, young Mr. Nye was entirely responsible.

In addition, his effort to smear oil on Al Smith was a cheap thing. It hooked him up with Robinson, the Ku Klux-supported Senator from Indiana, whose recent Senate speech was of a character to mortify some of the most partisan of his Republican colleagues, and even brought curt disagreement from two of them. I think the trouble with Mr. Nye is a determination that as chairman he will not be outshone by Senator Thomas J. Walsh, who, in the past, has been the real figure on the Committee, and to whom credit is due for what it has done. It is a pity Mr. Nye is chairman of the Committee. At the beginning of the session, when the progressive group were in a position to hold up the organization of the Senate, they made certain demands on the regular Republicans for committee chairmanships. The Teapot Dome Committee was one they wanted, and Nye was the man designated for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

chairman. Probably it will not make much difference in the long run, but it does seem too bad that he should be allowed to spoil a situation that might have really developed to a point where the good Calvin himself would have been forced to recognize the presence of corruption in an otherwise perfect world.

Both the public and the press appeared to be taking the exposures with more seriousness and understanding than they did four years ago. My judgment is that now, between Senator Nye's "rock the country" talk, his attack on Smith and the Robinson assault on Democrats alive and dead as being somehow connected with someone who knew someone who had an oil well, the average American voter is dizzy and in a frame of mind where any further revelations will leave him cold. It might have amounted to the same thing in the end anyhow; but in the meantime, the wicked rejoice. No wonder Tom Walsh looks discouraged.

As the really important presidential primaries approach, the strength of the Hoover candidacy becomes more apparent. Personally, I do not now believe they will beat Herbert, though I am aware there are many ways by which it can still be done. The great weakness of the opposition is that it has no real candidate around whom to rally. It is not possible to get the hard-boiled Mr. Dawes free of his Lowden chains in time to do any real business with him. The Coolidge-Hughes drafting movements are now completely wet. The "favorite sons" are a sickly lot, and the Herbert candidacy is the one thoroughly normal, natural, national, healthful, hopeful thing in the Republican party today. Hoover is free from oil, thoroughly advertised, "sold" to the women, with all the logic of the situation and cabinet prestige with him. If it does not nominate Herbert, it seems to me, the Grand Old Party will subject itself to a lot of unnecessary risk. That is not the sort of thing the Grand Old Party cares about doing.

There is, as I think I have pointed out in this place, only one real danger for Herbert. It lies in the amount of noise the Corn Belt delegates can make in the convention at Kansas City, and the degree to which the Pennsylvania-New York aggregation of political brilliance and brains becomes alarmed. If, as is expected, the McNary-Haugen farm-relief bill is again passed by Congress, and if, as is expected, Mr. Coolidge, advised and sustained by Mr. Mellon and Mr. Hoover, again vetoes the bill on account of the allegedly unconstitutional equalization-fee principle around which it revolves—then, beyond doubt, the intensity of the agricultural opposition to Herbert at Kansas City will be considerably intensified and increased. The howl will be raised that Hoover cannot win, that if he is nominated, the Corn Belt states will bolt the Republican ticket. There is a chance that this protest may become so menacing as to scare away the Hoover support in the East, but I do not think so. It is too easy to see through the hollowness of the threat. Suppose Hoover is "forced down the throat" of the Corn Belt, where are the great Republican states therein contained—states like Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Minnesota and Michigan—to go when they do revolt? To Al Smith? Yes, it is likely, isn't it? I have heard this talk of Republican states revolting a good many times in the course of a long, hard life, but it never materializes on election day. They revolt right clear up to the second Tuesday after the first Monday in November, and then they fall into line. Iowa did exactly that thing four years ago; which recalls to my memory the painful fact that the darned state owes me money right now. I had a bet with a bird right here in Washington that it would go for the late La Follette in that 1924 election—and it did not do so, by a majority too big for me to remember now. Revolt! Those Corn Belt states will revolt about the time Simeon D. Fess becomes a Communist.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Pedigreed Patriots

NEWS that the officials of the Daughters of the American Revolution have set themselves up as judges of what is patriotic and what is American, by compiling a blacklist of persons and organizations from whom they refuse to hear, stimulate in me a series of reflections which have often disturbed me in the past, and which it is now necessary, for the sake of my peace of mind, to carry to a conclusion. It so happens that, by ancestral standards, my duty to stand by the noble Daughters is unquestionable. A man whose name is identical with mine signed the Mayflower Compact; on both father's and mother's side, I am told, I spring from some of the more noted Pilgrim Fathers. Numerous ancestors fought in the Colonial wars and in the Revolutionary War. One participated with spirit, much to the horror of his Tory mother, in the Boston Tea Party. These facts I have taken no trouble to discover, but they have been unearthed by relatives who have joined the Colonial Dames, or the Sons or Daughters of this or that, and they are constantly thrust upon my attention by urgent letters from genealogists who request contributions (and who claim to be able to connect me not merely with these humble beginnings, but, generations before, with kings of France and Norway and even with Tsars of Russia), by invitations to become listed in the First Families of America, by reproachful communications upon my failure to help support the Alden Kindred and to attend I know not how many genetic parties and reunions. The thing that puzzles me is, what to do about it all.

All sorts of good reasons have occurred to me to justify abstention from these activities, but there always lurks the doubt whether they are not excuses concealing less worthy motives. Perhaps it is merely because I hate to pay dues, or because I am afraid of being bored by distant relatives, that I shirk ancestrally patriotic duties. At times I have even been moved by a sense of shame, as when, upon being twitted with Puritan ancestry by a friend who had happened to discover it, I have robbed the accusation of its sting with the revelation that my earliest Massachusetts forbear had indiscreet relations with an Indian woman and was sentenced to pay her a bushel of corn a year. But my usual justifications are more noble or intricate. I have reasoned that it is cheap to boast of accidental differences —to join, as it were, a band of ancestral *nouveaux riches*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I have wondered whether, after all, there was any greater virtue in those who happened to live in America between 1620 and 1800 than in the general run of those who live there now. I have noted the scientific doubts about the implications of heredity. Being of a mathematical turn of mind, I have reflected on the geometrical progression in the numbers of descendants as generations pass, and speculated whether there was any distinction in being one of the millions who must now be sprung from Colonial seed, all but a few thousands of whom either don't know or don't care about it. And I have reasoned that if there is anything either in ancestry or hereditary love of country, the virtues which they bestow ought to appear in the behavior of the individual son or daughter rather than through any claim to posthumous relationship. Whether for these reasons, or for the more practical ones, I have done my best to conceal my ancestry.

There has also lurked in my suppressed hopes the anticipation of a dramatic scene in which I should be the hero. Some time I intended to become involved in a controversy with a proud Regent—or, to be more gallant, a male official of one of these watchful societies. I should espouse the restriction of child labor, or more gymnasiums for Y. M. C. A.'s, or the right to read the Declaration of Independence in public—such things as the guardians of our traditions look upon with horror—and finally elicit the crushing response that if I don't like it I should go back to the country from which I came. Then, with beetling brows and outstretched index finger, I should reply, to settle the argument once for all, "You, sir, are descended from an ancestor who arrived in this country two years after mine!"

But the present issue offers a sharper temptation. Among those whom the D. A. R. officials have included in their blacklist are good friends of mine. Some of them are slandered by being called what they are not; others my relatives place among enemies of the country because they have struggled for the impartial administration of justice, or against political corruption, or for sanitary conditions in garment shops, or for peaceful means of adjusting international disputes. I must confess that liking and admiration for these accused persons does not seem to me in the least inconsistent with my thrill at having seen the drum beaten for the embattled farmers at Lexington; nor do I find anything in the Revolutionary tradition which would comport well with the intellectual terrorism practised by the patrioteers. After all, men did not freeze at Valley Forge in order that Sinclair might bribe public officers and so make his millions out of naval oil reserves, and be defended in doing so by Mr. Fred R. Marvin, who supplies the trusting Daughters and many other organizations with their list of persons who must not be listened to. Nor was the defiance of the tyrannies of George III undertaken in order that Thomas Mooney might be kept in prison after the perjury which convicted him had been exposed, or for the purpose of making sure that anyone who spoke for the adequate defense of two Italian workmen who seemed to lack a fair trial should be outlawed. And as to those on the list with whom I disagree, I should not know that I disagreed with them or why, unless I had listened to them, instead of silencing them because someone else had called them names. All this is trite enough. But it is appalling once more to realize that so many should be so un-American as not to want to form their own opinions about disputed subjects, and should consent meekly to follow so stupid, tight-minded and Tory-like a person as the Grand High Regent (or whatever her title is) of the D. A. R. The temptation is to come out and say—here is at least one pedigreed patriot who resents the insult which you embody to his ancestry and the cherished traditions of his youth.

But it is, after all, a temptation which will be resisted. I refuse to be betrayed into erecting my views on the same flimsy grounds as do those who proclaim their dicta from the platform of pedigree. And I know, now, that it is not a sense of virtue, but a sense of shame, that prevents me from acknowledging my ancestry. If my ancestors could have had such offspring, it is better that the tribal name be lost in the obloquy which it is earning—an obloquy which I do not wish to share. Therefore—though these ruminations are not fanciful but true in every detail—I shall remain anonymous.

American Laboratory Theater

Martine, by Jean-Jacques Bernard. Translated by Helen Grayson. The American Laboratory Theater. April 3, 1927.

IN a good painting of Chardin's there is a kind of poetry of bread. The objects, the people, the domestic moment, are set down with their surface simply and clearly seen; the observation is in friendly prose; the effect is not one of sentiment so much as of the grace of familiar association. Steadiness of hand and mind are everywhere, a sense of things accepted as they stand; a sequence that is without power but sensible and quiet. Sanity, precision and a sort of homely elegance are there. It is different in its way from the *genre* of other countries, not Dutch, English or Italian but French.

In the French drama, this mind that we see in Chardin spreads and develops one way and another into theatrical matter. In the plays of Vildrac, Copeau, to take instances well known in America, or Jean-Jacques Bernard, there is, though the quality is fuller and more colored with emotion, this same effort toward a quiet and smooth surface, a prose conveyance of living substance, a truth that is not sentimental, raw or violent, a form that is expressive of the dramatist's theme and ideas by means of its arrangement and logic, and that is moving because of the familiarity of the material. M. Bernard's "Martine," which brings the repertory season of the American Laboratory Theater to a close, is such a play. It is all about love, with scarcely a mention of the word; it employs the theme of dumb despair in the strong, lonely soul of a peasant girl; the striking theme of the need that the hero's beloved young wife feels to talk with this girl about him in his absence, torturing the girl to solace her own ache for the man they both love; the themes of family ties, of peasant goodness and harshness; it progresses to a denouement that is at once tragic, dumb, matter-of-fact, hopeful, life going on; and the presentation of all this remains on the ground, quietly colored, carefully

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

developed and set forth, and at the same time created with an air of openness, the plain necessity of natural things, the seeming easy flow of daily happenings.

In the first scene we watch the meeting by the roadside of Martine and Julien, who is coming home from three years with the army in Syria. Martine has been to market in the neighboring town, she has baskets with eggs and flowers for people at home: one of them is Julien's grandmother. In the next scene we have the old grandmother, delighted with Julien's return. We see her concern over his relation to Martine, whose parents are friends of hers. But these relations reach no climax, for Jeanne, the girl Julien is to marry, if they both are of the same mind still, comes for a visit. The old attraction is immediate. From this on, Martine has her cross to bear. The young wife, when Julien is away in Paris or abroad for his newspaper, finds herself compelled to speak with the Julien that is in Martine's heart. The grandmother persuades Martine to marry Alfred, who has long been waiting for her. In the last act Julien's grandmother is dead, he and Jeanne are moving to Paris, he comes to say goodbye to Martine, she is to bear Alfred a child in six months, and, after that, child after child till they have the right number for farming people. The grandmother's house has been sold. Alfred stands at one window and Martine at the other. They close the shutters and sit down at their two ends of the table. Alfred gets on with the harness that he is mending.

For us Anglo-Saxons the attraction of this kind of French dramatic art is very strong. We feel drawn to its character of simplicity, reserve, plain sense and quiet surface. We bring such plays over into English and produce them, and then, when the result is not quite up to what we think, somehow, it should be, we resort to blaming the translation and to complaints about the acting.

But what has happened is that we find names for qualities, and then expect the qualities to fit the names that we have found for them. This reserve, plainness, simplicity in "Martine" are not really what we mean by those terms. We inject into them certain elements of flatness, sentiment, sterility and warmth that they do not in themselves possess. In plays like this we do not register fully the force of the logic of their structure and ideas. The generalizations and solid social conceptions—such, for instance, as that of the family, the grandmother, her grandson, the production of children—against which the dramatist constructs his ideas and shades his meanings, have not the same clear position and working effectiveness for us. The tone, which means so much, escapes us as a full means of expression; the language of proportion is not the same as the language of proportion that we know—in "Martine," for example, we can observe in certain scenes the curious foreignness of the time taken for this or that motive to arrive or to wind up. In some ways this simplicity and openness of manner is more deceiving for us than the more patent foreign quality that appears in flourishes and rhodomontades.

Miss Grayson's translation of "Martine" sounds, perhaps, less good than it is. Such plays are in their own special fashion almost untranslatable. The lines depend on some beautiful closeness and naturalness of drawing, as they do in Chardin, or as the meaning does in the acting. In some places translation will be impossible. I remember the start with which I once heard in "Madre" by the Quintero brothers, the mother say to her son: "My son, you are not good." That was the English of the Spanish original, but it was not the sense of it. The Spanish does not mean: my son, you are not a good man; it means what the translator said, but the idea rests on a simple, complete conception that is Latin and that we do not have at all.

As for the acting of such plays, the problem in English is more difficult in many ways than in more violent or expressive foreign drama. The acting of "Martine" depends on the same perfect drawing and precision of naturalness that the play has in the original. In a sense, no foreign actor could be right in it.

That, however, does not keep the play from being a wise choice on the part of the American Laboratory Theater. "Martine" affords problems in sustained effects, in quietness of method and intensification of expression that are of immense value to these young players. I found the play and the playing not seldom boring—drawn out without enough filling to it—in the first part of the evening, though considerably better in the remainder. Mr. Boleslavsky's admirable directing was always in evidence. The only fault to be found with it was in the speed now and then; I had the general impression that this French play would naturally be played in a considerably shorter time.

Of the company, Mr. Herbert V. Gellendre, as the farmer, Alfred, gave an excellent performance, one well within the meaning of the French. In the part of Martine, Miss Ruth Nelson did what few actresses on Broadway could or would do. She kept the part strictly within its own character, never overcoloring it with special meanings of her own and never twisting it up or down, into more or less than it is, for the sake of her own exhibition. She has feeling, control and a voice naturally dramatic; and she should go a long way. The three other players varied from fair to bad.

Mr. Robert Edmond Jones' settings have his characteristic purity of means and his sympathetic heightening, through beauty, of the dramatic requirements of the scene.

STARK YOUNG.

CORRESPONDENCE

Hungary and the Peace of Europe

SIR: The issue of the New Republic of March 21 containing an article by Mr. Emery Deri under the title, "M. Benes Pulls the Strings," came somewhat belatedly into my hands. In spite of this delay, the sincere admiration which I have had for years for the clean and enlightened international policy of the New Republic, which influences so deeply the best political thought in America, obliges me not to leave unanswered and without challenge a point of view which seems to me radically erroneous.

I do not wish to abuse your time and space, and therefore I try to state as simply as possible my main points of controversy. They are the following:

1. It is not true that the smuggling of war materials from Italy to Hungary, detected by the Austrian customs authorities at St. Gothard, should be regarded as an entirely unimportant and ridiculous episode. The truth is, that Hungary arms herself continually in preparation for a future war.

2. It is not true that the incident was deliberately puffed up by the French and the Czech diplomacy in order to attain cer-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tain diplomatic advantages. The truth is, that it was, above all, the socialistic public opinion both in Austria and in France which compelled the French foreign office not to hush up the issue. Especially the sincere supporters of the Austrian Republic were, and are still, alarmed by the clandestine traffics of the Magyars, because they know that the connivance between the Austrian and the Hungarian Hapsburgist oligarchy would demolish, in case of war, the completely disarmed Austrian Republic. The shadow of the misfortune of Belgium during the World War presses heavily on the republic of the workers and intellectuals.

3. It is not true that "no sane man in Hungary would advocate a new war against the neighboring countries." The truth is, that it is a sacrosanct dogma of the present regime, and of public opinion guided by it, that Hungary must reconquer her former frontiers by a future war, for which she is constantly preparing. Under the disguise of a compulsory physical training, the whole population of the country is transformed into a military camp, secret irredentistic organizations embrace big strata of the intelligentsia, and from the elementary schools to the universities the bloodiest type of jingo patriotism is taught. Naturally, they would not start a new war under the present condition, but, as obedient vassals of Signor Mussolini, they expect feverishly the year repeatedly prophesied by the Duce when Italy will make her place in the sun with the help of her five million soldiers and her Hungarian and Albanian allies.

4. It is not true that the plan of the *Anschluss* "has never been very popular in Germany or in Austria, and has always been used as a bugaboo against France." The truth is, that the union between the two countries is the most ardent desire of the overwhelming majority of the population in both countries, and every keen statesman or diplomat knows very well that this tendency cannot be frustrated in the long run.

5. Though it is true that a sincere and serious Central European Locarno, desired by M. Benes, is not possible as long as the crude injustices of the Treaty of Trianon continue, it is equally true that even a revision of the frontiers, giving back the homogeneous Magyar territories to Hungary, would not bring peace as long as feudal Hungary is surrounded by countries where the small peasantry has become, or will become soon, the leading element. The Magyar magnates, aspiring for the restitution of the Hapsburgs and for the expansion of their feudal Fascism over foreign races, cannot settle a decent peace in the Danube basin.

That is the kernel of the truth. I do not accuse Mr. Deri of *any conscious misrepresentation of the truth. I know he is an* honest man and an able journalist. But his political views are biased by his long connection with the Hungarian daily, Az Est, which was a real war criminal before and during the World War by its continuous demagogic jingoism against Austria and the oppressed national minorities of former Hungary.

I am deeply convinced that the presentation of Mr. Deri is not helpful, either for the peace in Central Europe, or for the liberation of the Hungarian people from the worst oligarchy actually existing in Central and Eastern Europe.

Oberlin College, Oberlin, O. OSCAR JÁSZI.

SIR: It is rather embarrassing for me to be engaged in a public controversy with Professor Jászi, whom I have always held in high esteem and in whose defense I had fought many a journalistic battle in the past. The exceptions, however, he has taken to my recent article in the New Republic show a deplorable misunderstanding of the whole Central European situation, and oblige me to correct the erroneous and rather arbitrary views set forth in his letter.

1. Professor Jászi contends in the first and third paragraphs of his letter that Hungary, in violation of the stipulations of the Treaty of Trianon, is arming herself in preparation for a future war, and that the St. Gothard incident should be regarded from this point of view. While the eminent scholar fails to offer any tangible proof or evidence for the support of his contention, I beg to be allowed to quote a few figures, which can easily decide this point of the controversy. Hungary has at the present an army of 35,000 men, while the standing peacetime armies of the three countries of the Little Entente count 600,000 men in arms. Hungary has no tanks, no gas masks, no heavy artillery, no air fleet, nor has she any factory turning out war material, and the country's backwardness in industrial production is such that not even in case of war would it be able to turn its industrial plants into factories for ammunition. On the other hand, the countries of the Little Entente have armies well equipped with tanks, gas masks, heavy artillery and airplanes. The Skoda factory, one of the most powerful ammunition plants in the world, is in Czechoslovakia, and is turning out war material *en masse* for those three countries, which are confessedly and avowedly allied for one single purpose: to keep a small, weak and disarmed fourth neighbor in eternal dependence. How, in view of these facts, Professor Jászi can assert that it is Hungary who is preparing for a future war, I am at a loss to understand. With the same right, he could say that Nicaragua is preparing for a war against the United States. That public opinion in Hungary is fervently demanding a revision of the Treaty of Trianon is the most natural thing in the world, and if Professor Jászi calls that country on account of this demand a potential peace-breaker, he can accuse of disturbing general peace any man unwilling to acquiesce in the fact that he has been robbed of his rightful property.

2. Professor Jászi advances a theory that socialist public opinion in France and Austria brought pressure to bear on the French Foreign Office not to hush up the St. Gothard incident. While I, in my article, showed the working of the Quai d'Orsay's press apparatus, and proved how the affair *was* hushed up by France and the Little Entente, Professor Jászi has no proofs to support his theory.

3. Professor Jászi's view regarding the popularity of the *Anschluss* idea both in Austria and Germany is evidently based on sentiments expressed by the socialistic press of the two countries, while I, in my article, gave voice to the opinion of official circles. If Professor Jászi would follow more closely the line of Herr Stresemann's foreign policy and the diplomatic moves of Chancellor Seipel, he would be less emphatic in his assertion regarding that "most ardent desire" of the two countries towards an *Anschluss.*

4. As to Professor Jászi's statement that even a revision of the Treaty of Trianon would not bring peace as long as Hungary is surrounded by countries where the small peasantry is the leading element, I decline to enter into a controversy, since my article did not deal with problems of internal policy in Hungary. It seems to me, however, that Professor Jászi is forgetful of the fact that at present the most powerful group in the Magyar Parliament is that of the *Kisgazdák,* the small peasantry.

How much the brilliant sociologist's views on affairs of Central European politics have been obscured by the personal bitterness with which he has been waging war on the present Hungarian government for almost ten years, is deplorably evidenced by his remark about the Hungarian daily, Az Est, and my past connection with that paper. Though I have no reason to defend the Az Est against Professor Jászi's attack, for the sake of truth I must say that never, never before the War did this paper advocate war. It was the very newspaper which first gave voice to pacifistic public opinion in Hungary, and was the most powerful supporter of the same Count Károlyi in whose cabinet Professor Jászi occupied a position as Minister. While trying to trace the roots of my "bias" to my connection with a newspaper with which I had nothing to do for years, he seems to have forgotten that in the meantime I founded and published a Hungarian weekly in New York to combat reactionaries and jingoism, and that one of the most esteemed contributors to this paper was Professor Jászi himself. If the views of one of us are biased, they are certainly the views of Professor Jászi, showing the regrettable effects of a personal feud between himself and the Hungarian government. While I subscribe to many of his views regarding domestic Hungarian politics, I see, with much regret, that he is defending the most shameless imperialism of post-war Europe: that of the Little Entente, based on oppression, violence, and thriving on one of the crudest injustices of modern European history.

New York City. EMERY DERI.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Germany Ten Years After

Germany Ten Years After, by G. H. Danton. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 295 pages. $3.50.

MR. DANTON has written an interesting and informing book on present conditions in Germany. If all exchange professors returned bearing such sheaves with them, we should have in the system of exchanges a fresh and fertile field in which to cultivate better relations between the peoples. But few professors have such a wide base from which to triangulate their observations of Europe as has Professor Danton—an American with a long experience of China. Indeed, his observations have all the distinctness and some of the apparent disconnectedness of a surveyor's field notes. But they give us the bearings and levels of heights and depths more accurately than is possible by laboriously climbing them or plumbing them as others have done. He can, for example, begin from his preface with the conclusion that others have reached as the result of difficult and even dangerous expeditions—"That even when compared with chaotic China, Europe seems at times depressing."

Anyone who has been in a great mass movement—however chaotic and catastrophic—like that of socialism in Russia or nationalism in China—does find not only Europe but America of the present day depressing. And if Mr. Danton had been in Germany during its revolution, summary and superficial as it was, he would have more easily recognized the meaning of much that he records—he would have found threads on which to string the pearls of his observations instead of having to cast them before us in assorted packets. Here, for example, is a black pearl of some cost—"Nowhere in the world do the faces of the aged show such signs of suffering as in Germany." In what depths of gloom—by what long years of distress—by what layer on layer of hardening misery was this pearl built up? The marvel is not that the older people suffered, but how any survived at all. For the devaluation of money killed as large a proportion of the aged as the War did of the able-bodied.

But this relief of the nation from its living liabilities as well as from its dead-load of debt was beneficial. To see the Germany of today, we must look not at the faces of the old, but at those of the young. Not even in the youth of America, free from care for the future, or in the youth of Russia, free from the claims of the past, does one see the same free outlook as in the youth of Germany. For the American soon finds the "shades of the prison-house enclose the growing boy." The Russian finds that he has lost the chains of the past only to be shackled in the most rigid of regimes. The German alone, in the words of his own poet, can

> Wander at will, where'er his dreams invite,
> The day before him and behind—the night.

The writer will never forget what was said to him, during one of the fiercest fights of the German revolution, by two young leaders of the opposing camps. Said one—just before he was killed in bombing, single-handed, a battery that was bombarding a workers' quarter: "We are doing what you Allied soldiers never could have done even if you had fought your way to Berlin. We are destroying Kaiserism and making a new Europe free from war. Yet you are shooting us in the back. We are winning the war for you and peace for us all. But you are making new wars by your peace." And the other was a young professional soldier of a Russian military family who had been a leader in that extraordinary colonial campaign that maintained the German cause in East Africa throughout the War, against overwhelming odds. He said: "You Allies have crushed Germany with your black and yellow mercenaries. It is a treason to European civilization which means the end of its hegemony." And when we look at Europe today, crushed by Asiatic Juggernauts and corrupted by African Jazzes, who will say they were wrong?

The weakest part of Professor Danton's book is his analysis of the spirit of the new Germany and its relation to the real soul of the old Germany. When he says, "The old Ghost of German *Kultur* has been pretty effectively laid," he means, of course, the absurd turnip-bogey that was dressed up by war propaganda and presented as the Spirit of Germany. But unless one understands not only what German *Kultur* really is—as to some extent the Professor does—but also where it comes from and whither it is going, one can understand neither the new nor the old Germany. The history of Germany is the story of the slow seepage of this civilization from its Frankish center in the Rhine valley—in the culture center of Europe—into the Suabian tribes of the south, the Saxons of the center, and finally into the Slavs of the north. The history of the War is that of a reaction against this traditional trend—namely, the nationalist imperialism, based on Berlin, begun by Bismarck, and built up into a Kaiserism of Blood and Iron. The German revolution would have broken this bondage and restored the normal process of German and European development, but for another reaction which has revived the vision of Germany as an armed *Arbiter Mundi*. This reaction was caused in the first place by the maintenance of the British hunger-blockade, and in the second place by the maintenance of the French occupation of the Rhineland, the shrine of Germanic peace and progress.

It is the instinctive realization by Germans that what is best in Germany is German *"kultur,"* and that the Rhine valley is its center and source, that causes its prolonged occupation by the French with black mercenaries to be regarded as such an injury to themselves and such an insult to Europe as will never be forgotten or forgiven. A very similar, though less serious resentment is excited by their own realization that the Germans as colonists showed a higher sense of responsibility towards inferior races than most other European states.

The expropriation of German colonists and the exclusion of Germany from the mandate is resented not so much as an injury, but rather as an insult. Finally the branding of German *"kultur"* as a "war criminal" in the Treaty of Versailles causes that treaty to be regarded by Germans not only as an injustice to themselves, but as an injury to Europe. We may not in our generation be able to revise the material injustices of the Treaty, but we can at least reverse its moral injuries. By doing so we shall again get all that is best in Germany on our side instead of, as at present, supporting all that is bad.

It is these injuries to the spirit of Germany and to the self-respect of the people who are the keystone of the European community that accounts for much if not most of the present discords and dissipations recorded by Professor Danton as disturbing and delaying the German renascence. For example, it accounts for the anti-Semitism that has already cost Germany the lives of indispensable reformers like Rathenau and Eisner. For the Jews have come to be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

regarded as a foreign element fatal to the German spirit —both by Nationalist young Germany because of the sympathies of some of the Jews with Socialism, and by Socialist young Germany because of the leading part other Jews play in the odious profiteering of the plutocracy. "How German!" says the foreigner, shocked by the unrestraint and ugliness of Berlin profiteers. But the same post-war material luxury and moral laxity, when shown in the crude vulgarities of New York or the fog-veiled vices of London, are really finding a more characteristic national expression there than they do in Berlin. Unfortunately, the German race, sound and sane as it is, has one serious weakness. It cannot easily rid itself of bad rulers, whether social or political. Its present political governors are weak —its social guides are wicked. It wants our help instead of our hindrance in giving expression to its better self.

One help we can give is in studying it sympathetically, as does Professor Danton. But there are others.

GEORGE YOUNG.

Scrap-Baskets

Tokefield Papers, by Frank Swinnerton. New York: George H. Doran Company. 265 pages. $2.50.

Castles in Spain, and Other Screeds, by John Galsworthy. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 263 pages. $2.

The Savour of Life, by Arnold Bennett. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 313 pages. $2.50.

NOT every essay is an achievement. In fact, most of them are forlorn hopes. Considered baldly, an essay is nothing more nor less than a monologue, in which an omniscient person lays down the law on any subject that happens to meet his fancy—too often, in a self-conscious style which he imagines to be good writing. It remains a mystery why such stuff is ever read. A really first-class writer should be able to write essays, of course, as well as being able to write verse or short stories or political editorials, but this indication of what a first-class writer should be able to do immediately narrows down the field of first-class writers to almost infinitesimal proportions.

It may as well be admitted at once that neither Mr. Swinnerton nor Mr. Galsworthy can be admitted into this innermost circle. "Tokefield Papers" is a collection of articles written mostly for monthly magazines, and consequently bears that guarantee of almost unreadable respectability which stamps it as literary to an alarming degree. "Why Gardeners Are Gloomy," "The Advantages of Disaster," "The Duty of Being Agreeable," "On Thinking Well of Oneself," "On Giving Way to Things"—they are the usual subjects, written with painstaking and undistinguished monotony, occasionally infused with a tired and shop-worn sprightliness. Mr. Swinnerton's style is perfect for this kind of thing: it is almost hopeless. His sentences are cast in a wearisome pattern, and it is almost as tiring to hear the iterated thud of the final noun as it must have been to write it. "Such helpless and dangerous folk do not ask for advice in so many words. They illustrate and prove their need of it. But for them, as for the thoughtless schoolboy, a bout of advice is as ineffective as a wigging. They can hardly listen to it, so preoccupied are they with irrelevant thoughts," etc., etc.

Mr. Galsworthy's collection is different, but not much better. Three of his fourteen papers were written as speeches, and all reveal the platform attitude. As we read these troubled musings, couched in his peculiarly banal style, urging us gently to remember the dignity of human life, the epic quality of courage; admitting that "Truth and beauty are a hard quest, but what else is there worth seeking?"—we feel constantly that he is far from the point, that we have heard it all before in many baccalaureates, and that we are bored. In "A Note on Sentiment," he tells ingenuously of how he rescued one of his novels from sentimentality by cutting out a third of it. But these little flashes of self-revelation, like the too-rare spoonerisms of a preacher, are not enough to keep the congregation awake.

When we come to that old Midlander, Mr. Arnold Bennett, we see at once, and more clearly than before, how anemic is Swinnerton and how ineffective is Galsworthy. "The Savour of Life," this prodigious man has called his book, and it is well named. Here are a few of his subjects: Mickey Walker (the boxer), doctors and medicine, Einstein, Russian fiction, food, drink, editing a woman's paper, sleep, the decimal system, European hotels, books and the movies, politics, daylight saving. The commonsense cunning bluffness of his good prosy prose is more than refreshing, it shows up in the first paragraph the staginess and prim artificiality of nine-tenths of what passes today for good English. "I write for money," says this well paid man. "I write for as much money as I can get." And as he writes on anything in which he is interested, and as his interests are abounding, it is evident that he makes a good income. This is quite as it should be. His effrontery in holding opinions on what are regarded as technical matters is amazing and inspiring. After making a study of the Einstein theory, for instance, he announces eleven conclusions which he, as an ordinary intelligent person, has reached in regard to it. He objects as follows to the hypothesis of the unvarying speed of light: "Thus, if the sun could be projected towards you at a velocity of 300,000 feet a second, it would hit you in the eye at precisely the same instant as its ray reached your eye. Which seems to me to be very fishy." On literary matters he is just as unabashed by the panjandrums. Of Henry James' recollections he has this to say, and no more: "I think they push uncompromising unreadableness further than it was ever pushed before."

He is so common-sensible that at times he is dull, and makes us yearn for a more flashy brilliance; but his vigorous attacks on nonsense and his shrewd, plain competence usually carry the reader with him. He simplifies many an involved literary question when he says flatly that "in journalism, knowledge and tastes are useless until they are set down on paper clearly and neatly in a manner agreeable to read and easy to understand. . . . " And he confirms many a suspicion about the present fiction market when he avers that "any mediocrity with impudence and a freely wandering mind can concoct a novel that people will read."

He refuses to recognize the convention that a novelist shall confine himself to writing novels; he is the journalist *par excellence,* the first-class writing man who can turn his pen to any subject, and in a variety of forms. When Galsworthy speaks on social matters, as he is fond of doing, it is always with that slightly apologetic tone, that manner veiled in literary jargon, of a novelist on foreign ground. Swinnerton is frankly not a voting citizen at all. But when Bennett wants to unburden himself of any political, economic, scientific or literary ideas, he cumbers himself with no self-deprecating gesture, but proceeds to say what he thinks in good plain English, and he says it better and plainer than the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

technical expert can. This, also, is as it should be. A writer is supposed to be able to write, and that means something very different from exhibiting his own personality. It means that he should be able to convey any idea to his reader, and should be able to convey it better than anybody else can. In Swift's day the world expected such performance, but in ours, it has taken a few men like Arnold Bennett to remind us of what, actually, is the writer's job.

T. S. MATTHEWS.

"Art of the Night"

Art of the Night, by George Jean Nathan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 296 pages. $2.50.

TO readers familiar with Mr. Nathan's previous collections, his new book, "Art of the Night," will prove less stimulating as well as less offensive. Mr. Nathan's style has perhaps sobered with the years, or his "gags" may have lost their effectiveness through repetition, but, for almost the first time, there is a suspicion of dullness in his pages.

Mr. Nathan's special technique is well known. It consists in either frightening or flattering us into acceptance of opinions which, whether they be sound or specious, are always made to appear delightfully astute. He astonishes his reader with his "erudition," his forthrightness, his elaborate *insouciance*. Nothing he says must be taken as a matter of course; it must always be seen as something remarkably personal, paradoxically different. He is an incorrigible show-off.

But his mind is probably better than his style; his flippancy, we are constantly reminded, must obscure neither the solidity of his judgment nor the extent of his knowledge. In reading his latest volume, however, one is led to question this attitude toward Mr. Nathan's work, and one becomes reasonably sure that whatever else he may be, he is certainly not a theater critic. Mr. Nathan is superior in intelligence to most newspaper reviewers—although his opinions as opinions do not nowadays greatly differ from theirs—he knows more plays, apparently, than any other critic alive, and, above all, he has performed a notable service as a propagandist for a culturally significant American theater. Nevertheless, we shall look in vain, if we seek in "Art of the Night" a single piece of important theater criticism. We find estimates of plays with which we can readily agree, but there is hardly an instance of an actor artistically revealed, a scene-designer or a stage-director critically studied.

Mr. Nathan professes an admiration for Gordon Craig, yet his criticism is rarely focussed on those elements of production that are specifically of the theater. It is chiefly the play that occupies his critical interest; the acting and staging of the play are commended and condemned only occasionally, and then as a mere incident. For acting and staging to Mr. Nathan are subsidiary factors in the theater. Hence, he is only a literary critic who goes to the theater. This is not to say he is absolutely indifferent to purely theatrical values: he loves the movement, the color, the sound of the art; he has a great fondness for such forms as musical comedy and burlesque, but he is unable to see and judge purely theatrical phenomena with a critical eye. His attachment to the theater as such may be considered a sort of lust of the flesh.

The article on Max Reinhardt that concludes the present volume is an excellent illustration of Mr. Nathan's impotence as a theater critic. Mr. Nathan considers Reinhardt the foremost stage-director of our day. What does he choose to praise in Reinhardt's work? Reinhardt's superiority, according to him, is proved by the fact that he is "a different man in the instance of each separate production which he makes." It is questionable whether an artist whose work lacks personality may be regarded as an artist; and if Mr. Nathan had the eye to see it, he would perceive the very distinct personality evident in all Reinhardt productions. An authentic critic would sense that personality, present it in his own terms and test its quality. But Mr. Nathan, instead, undertakes to enhance the impression of the German director's excellence by a series of flashy and ignorant comparisons.

Mr. Nathan has of late been attacked for his cheap sexual cynicism and his assumed indifference to political problems. But even Mr. Seldes, who administered a particularly thorough drubbing, speaks with marked respect of Mr. Nathan, the theater critic. It is time we realized that Mr. Nathan's criticism is on a level with the rest of his thinking.

HAROLD E. CLURMAN.

A Defense of the Occident

Defense of the West, by Henri Massis, translated by F. S. Flint, with preface by G. K. Chesterton. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 260 pages. $3.

THE author of this beautiful and moving defense of our civilization belongs to a group of recent French writers (of which Jacques Maritain and Charles Maurras are other conspicuous members) who bring to the solution of contemporary problems the whole fervid technique of the medieval apologist. M. Massis has behind him something more even than the best tradition of French prose: the affinity of mind with Renan or Gourmont is augmented by an affinity of spirit with no less a personage than St. Thomas Aquinas. The result is that his book, which presents the largest theme that he or any member of his group has yet essayed, possesses a tone of almost hierarchical portent. For the militant Catholic it will be welcome as the most brilliant modern restatement of the Thomist synthesis; for others it should be either fascinating as an exercise in intellectual dynamics, or comforting as an unexpected affirmation of the possibilities of the intelligence to solve the difficulties of our generation.

For intelligence, the intelligence of the West, as opposed to the disruptive mysticism of the East, lies at the root of a thesis which carries M. Massis on from his initial survey of contemporary Europe to a drastic recapitulation of European thought since the Reformation. As an apologist, his first business is, of course, to find an immediate and authentic heresy, and the larger part of his work is dedicated to baring the nature and origins of this heresy. The soul of the West, we are told, is being attacked from within by certain European nations who are turning to the East for solace and relief from the disorder of spirit for which they are themselves responsible. (He is careful to distinguish between the "yellow peril," about which we Americans have heard so much, and the more fundamental peril to our culture brought about by oriental propagandists, native and foreign.) Germany, since it has in his opinion the greatest number of responsibilities to escape, is the most offending of these nations; and in the eastern leanings of her philosophic writers, Spengler and Keyserling, he sees merely the rationalization of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

her sin against occidental unity. His treatment of *"Der Untergang des Abendlandes"* is a masterpiece of catalytical criticism. Since the final import of that work is the futility of all human endeavor, through the substitution of the philosophy of *becoming* for that of *being,* and the consequent breakdown of the will, what better could serve to quiet the qualms of a nation still suffering from an extremely bad conscience? Moreover, he sees in these conclusions, and in the oriental explorations of Count Keyserling, a kind of "intellectual revenge" perpetrated against France in her hour of weakness. Further signs of the German retreat to the Orient appear in the intense absorption of the younger generation in the Anthroposophism of Steiner, the Hinduism of Rabindranath Tagore, Taoist mysticism, and Buddhist wisdom. These cults, together with the current German philosophies themselves, operate also to influence the young, undeveloped, still barbaric mind of Russia, the other country which Massis offers as a distinct menace to western unity. Here the situation is even more hopeless, since Russia, without an indigenous tradition of her own, has ancient racial and temperamental affiliations with the East, and will undoubtedly supplement her political with cultural alliances.

With even greater alarm than he views the disruptive influences from within, Massis, paralleling one of Paul Valéry's deductions, asks us to consider that the East has acquired every idea that the West spent centuries in developing; that she is now able to use our own weapons against us. Therefore, since it is through our mind she hopes to strike at us, "Let the forces of the mind organize the defense," writes M. Massis. At a later point he proceeds to define those elements of the western mind to which it once owed its supremacy; these are the elements of precision, discrimination, and separation, all of which are implied in the Anaxagoran maxim, "At the beginning all things were confused; intelligence came and put each thing in its place." Consequently, everything good in our civilization derives from that western theology, compacted of Judeo-Christian monotheism and Greco-Latin culture, "which put the accent on the unity, the personality, and the finality of *being.*" The interpretation of these terms brings him finally, by a familiar enough process of logic, to the conclusion that never were man's possibilities so nearly realized as during the period when the authority of the Church still maintained the unity of Europe. We are therefore advised to return to the Middle Ages for the reintegration of our consciousness, to the Middle Ages "which were greater for what they might have been than for what they did do, and left unfinished."

It is possible to follow M. Massis, to admire the steady clarity of his thought, up to the point where we expect him to be most helpful. We are grateful to him for dissipating those current cults and fads that are a disgrace to common sense; but the antagonism he sets up between eastern and western mysticism seems scarcely as sharp as he believes. A Renan might easily prove that the religious elements of Christianity itself are oriental in origin. What Massis regards as an antagonism was once solved by compromise: a reconciliation of the "Judeo-Christian" mystical elements with the stern organization of Rome. The difference between the mysticism of the East and the West may remain finally one of *form.* Thus, whatever is valid in M. Massis' attack against the Orient is equally valid for Europe; and what makes the Thomist synthesis difficult to accept, even by those who admire its beauty, is something at once so common and so inaccessible as simple faith.

WILLIAM TROY.

Style and Fashion

Alger: A Biography without a Hero, by Herbert R. Mayes. New York: Macy-Masius. 241 pages. $3.50.

Buccaneers of the Pacific, by George Wycherley. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 444 pages. $5.

MR. MAYES' life of Horatio Alger and Mr. Wycherley's account of the buccaneers in the Pacific are two of those rather long books with rather short bibliographies which are chiefly important as examples of a recent tendency in literature of a certain order. The tendency in question is toward the "styling" of books—something which is not to be confused with stylization, and often seems the opposite of style. To define it briefly, styling is the attempt to stimulate consumption by issuing yearly models. Having originated long ago with clothing and furniture, it was extended soon after their invention to such products as automobiles, phonographs, and radios; this year pianos and watches are being "styled"; and volumes like these give evidence of what is probably an unconscious effort to extend the process into literature.

Just as General Motors, in 1927, issued dozens of models in two contrasting colors, so the more enterprising publishers engaged in the mass production of biographies. Not a few of these were manufactured in accordance with one ingenious formula; they were designed to appeal to what are known as sophisticated readers by their skeptical or patronizing tone, and to hold the attention of readers in general by exploiting almost the same material as the true-story magazines. Mr. Mayes' biography of Alger, to which this description applies, is a little better than the average of its class. Its subject is interesting; its style is undistinguished but vigorous; it summarizes a certain amount of original research and shows a certain feeling for the picturesque. But it is thin: it represents less work and a lesser degree of imaginative organization than we have the right to expect from a book which costs, after all, as much as a theater ticket. Even its title is a confession of partial failure. It is called "a biography without a hero"—a term which in theory is impossible, and in practice is an admission that Horatio Alger does not fill the book. The author seems a little bored with him. By definition the fault cannot be Alger's; it lies with a biographer who, after performing enough research to justify a rather large pamphlet and enough imaginative work to justify a magazine article, has, in reportorial style, written a volume of 241 octavo pages.

Meanwhile the demand for biography is nearly satisfied, and publishers are faced with the law of diminishing returns. To stimulate consumption, new interests must be found, new models must be developed, and there is already a tendency toward a certain type of picturesque history. Mr. Wycherley, by his choice of subject, seems to recognize this trend. In a deplorable style compounded of slang and archaisms he tells the story of those English rovers who, beginning with Drake, sailed round Cape Horn, looted the silver fleet on its way from Callao, attacked the Manila galleon off the California coast, held a few Dons for ransom, and finally sailed homewards by way of the Spice Islands, leaving behind them a memory of arson, murder, rape, piracy, and what the present author is not too nice to describe as "deeds of derring-do". . . . Automobiles, in 1928 and 1929, will have high, narrow radiators. How the new books will be styled is a little harder to predict, but perhaps "The Buccaneers of the Pacific" suggests the answer.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SCHOOL

Institute of World Unity
"Creating the New World Outlook"
Green Acre, Eliot, Maine

LECTURE COURSES
Second Season

HERBERT ADAMS GIBBONS, Ph.D. of Princeton.
July 30-August 3.
Five lectures on **"The World Today in Terms of World Unity."**

FRANK HAMILTON HANKINS, Ph.D. of Smith College.
August 6-10.
Five lectures on **"Racial Differences and International Harmony."**

EDWIN ARTHUR BURTT, Ph.D. of University of Chicago.
August 13-17.
Five lectures on **"Science, Philosophy and Religion."**

NATHANIEL SCHMIDT, Ph.D. of Cornell University.
August 20-24.
Five lectures on **"The Evolution of Religion."**

Terms
4 courses, $20. 1 course, $5.
Single lecture, $1.50.

INSTITUTE OF WORLD UNITY
The purpose of the Institute is to promote consideration of the new viewpoints and principles accepted by responsible scholars in history, science, philosophy and religion, especially those which create a real basis for faith in the capacities of humanity to achieve the spirit of unity and co-operation in all that pertains to the vital interests of mankind.
The site is noted for its remarkable natural beauty and healthfulness. Two hundred acres, inn, cottages, community house, library, arts and crafts studio, theatre, dormitories and camps. Bathing, boating, tennis, golf, etc.
Accommodations at reasonable rates.
Send for Prospectus today.
INSTITUTE OF WORLD UNITY
4 East 12th Street, New York City.

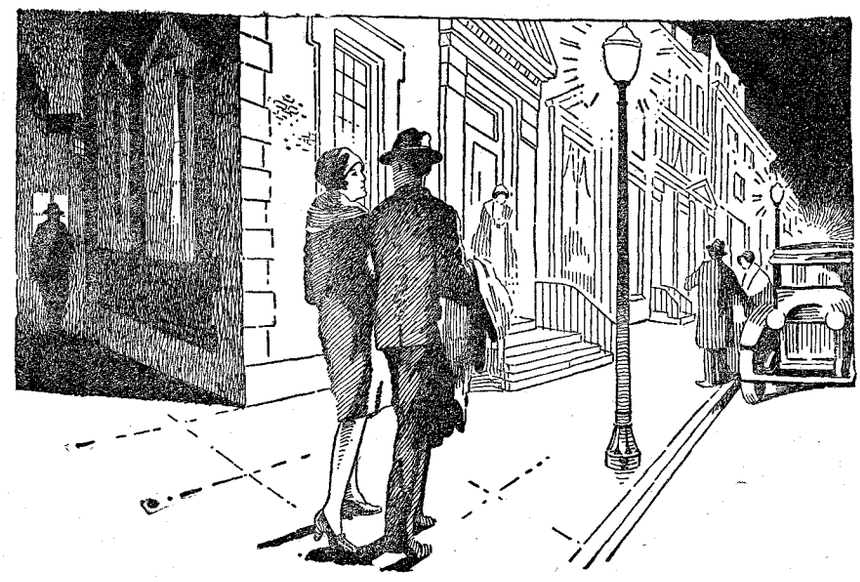
SUMMER PLACE

FOR RENT, June and July, 1928 (May also, if desired)—an unspoiled hundred-and-fifty-year old farmhouse in Western Massachusetts hill-town, five and a half hours from New York; four from Boston. Completely furnished; two large bedrooms, three small; four fireplaces; two bathrooms; Delco electric lights and pump; telephone, R. F. D. Shed for car, or Ford touring, Model T, 1926, with house. Dry wood; garden planted; swimming pool in brook. Near village and state road; nine miles from station, with bus three times daily. Elevation one thousand feet; beautiful view of Monadnock. Owner in Europe after May 1. Rent reasonable. Address Box 70, R. F. D., Conway, Mass.

MAGAZINE

THE CRITIC AND GUIDE
Interesting from cover to cover.
DR. WILLIAM J. ROBINSON
EDITOR
Monthly, $2.00 per annum. Send for free Sample copy.
12 Mt. Morris Park West, New York City

HAVE YOU—
A Summer Resort—
A Summer House—
to advertise?
Write
THE NEW REPUBLIC
421 West 21st St.
Advertising Department
For special rate



Who wants to live on a poorly lighted street?

Nobody who knows the advantages of modern lighting—the safety for drivers and pedestrians—the protection against crime—the evidence of a desirable residential area.

To-day, no street need be dark, for good street lighting costs as little as two dollars a year per capita; and for that two dollars there is a substantial increment in property value.

It isn't a question whether you can afford good street lighting, but—can you afford not to have it?

The service of General Electric's street-lighting specialists are always at the command of communities interested in better lighting. In co-operation with your local power company, they will suggest appropriate installations, and give you the benefit of their long experience in the design and operation of street-lighting and electric traffic-control systems.

GENERAL ELECTRIC

GENERAL

LITERARY SERVICE. Editing, research, proofreading. Manuscripts prepared for publication. Illustrations secured. Expert printing advice. All mechanics of production provided. Appointments by telephone.
VANDERBILT 6230,
Room 1003 516 Fifth Avenue, N. Y. C.

EARN $25 WEEKLY
Spare time, writing for newspapers, magazines. Experience unnecessary. Details FREE.
Press Syndicate, 1060. St. Louis, Mo.

FOR RENT

FOR RENT, Furnished, Greenwich Village, four or six room garden apartment. Occupancy May 1st to October 1st, $110. Call **Miss Eagan, Whitehall 5733.**

BOOKS

THE BOOKS YOU *CAN'T GET* ELSEWHERE MAY BE *RENTED* FOR A NOMINAL FEE!
Members throughout the United States have access to a collection of rare, scarce, unusual, out-of-print and curious books chosen largely by themselves.
Limited editions, privately printed items, unexpurgated translations and exceptional reprints may be had through this entirely unique service.
You may now **read without buying,** at moderate cost, both the quaint old books and the extraordinary new ones.
Please state occupation or profession when writing for information and lists.
Esoterika Biblion, Inc., Dept. C2.
45 West 45th Street

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Recent Fiction

Old Enchantment, by Larry Barretto. New York: The John Day Company. $2.

TWO things necessary to a great novelist are knowledge of his characters and theme, living and thorough, and the ability to apply this knowledge to the page. In the first third of "Old Enchantment," Larry Barretto meets these requirements. His characters are a maiden aunt, a widower nephew and the children of this widower, a boy and a girl. His theme is the arrogance of impoverished aristocracy. These children are the thirteenth generation of Knickerbocker New York. At the opening of the novel they are already in reduced circumstances, living in a brownstone house in Twenty-seventh Street. The father is nothing. The aunt and the household she dominates are typical of finely bred poverty. Their losing struggle is the story.

As the story broadens to show the revolt of the great-niece and nephew from the tyranny of this woman and her ancestor-worship, the workmanship grows shallower instead of deeper. Plot begins to show its head above character, which is finally annihilated when both the children are happily married far beneath them. This is disheartening. For the opening pages, which contain some memorable passages of Manhattan family life at the beginnings of this century, especially a fight wherein the young heir of a gentle family is beaten up by a band of slum children, lead the reader to expect much. When the action reaches the present day, it ceases to be engrossing.

Ashenden, or The British Agent, by W. Somerset Maugham. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

A FEW years ago Arnold Bennett, seeking to give the world a super-detective novel, wrote "The Grand Babylon Hotel." He intended to out-Oppenheim Oppenheim. Costly cigars and priceless vintages of champagne were consumed, but the work missed fire. It cloyed. In Mr. Maugham's book the Bennett ideal is obtained. An English novelist is made a lieutenant of spies in 1914. His position is about half-way between the spies he employs and the head of the service who is his employer. With this novelist the reader goes on eight or ten unrelated adventures in half a dozen European countries, ending with an incident in Russia during the fall of Kerensky.

In the company of the cool, sensitive, sensible Ashenden you listen to the amazing confession of a polished diplomat. You dine in his palace and drink his brandy. Nothing is exaggerated. Proportion is observed. Reality is not outraged. Even a scented, dangerous, flamboyant, amorous, hairless Mexican is a real person, as pictured by Mr. Maugham. The types are well contrasted. Not always do you know the end of a given episode. Ashenden is a subordinate who sometimes operates without knowing the ultimate purpose of his work. Through the chipper, touch-and-go phrases in which graceful humor is injected, you take baths with him, are fatigued and amused in his company, and you are never bored. In the Russian interlude there is a siren of the Slavic Red intelligentsia, a woman saturated with emotion. She is contrasted with a virginal, discursive, middle-aged business man from Philadelphia. Fun is made of both types, but the story ends in Petrograd before a completely real little pool of unexpected blood.

Crusade, by Donn Byrne. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $2.

IT would be difficult to find a fitter subject for romance than the Crusades. Take the factions alone, Frederick Barbarossa, the Pope and the Knights Templar, all at each others' throats; add the countless Christian sects glowing with hatred of each other as they visit their holy places; include the Moslem world, then, as now, picturesque as the Arabian Nights; remember the commercial aspect of those ventures; then let the whole be told by a hot-headed great-nephew of a King of Ireland, with his medieval background given in detail, and you have the material and medium for a great romance.

Donn Byrne has taken the externals of these details and written "Crusader," which will be read by many people with pleasure. He has that gift for telling a story which has made the grammarless Irish famous from salon to saloon. He is as mindless as Dunsany, but he moves more rapidly. The weak part of his book is that it is written for stenographers. His grease-paint Saracens fight battles of whipped cream. As his brush passes over the clever stencil, it drips purple. "They shared with each other the soft night of the moon and roving hares. . . . Since he had put away Ireland, Asia had flowered in his heart." His pages are buttered with meretricious snatches from the Troubadours. There are passages reeking with oriental honey. It is coarse enough and obvious enough to attract a large public. This includes the morals of his hero, which are stainless. The Boy Scouts will welcome him.

C. A. C.

The Land of Green Ginger, by Winifred Holtby. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. $2.

JOANNA LEIGH'S love does not fly out at the window when poverty first comes in at the door. But the illness that turns her romantic bridegroom into a self-pitiful, bad-tempered and suspicious invalid, and his jealous tantrums when the monotonous misery of the house is broken by an alien intruder, complete her tragedy. The story of her valor in defense of a youthful ideal against sordid and brutal reality is rather like a biased war-correspondent's account of a siege in which all the incidents enhance the heroism of the defenders. It progresses coherently and plausibly enough, with real dramatic interest and passages of imaginative beauty and sincerity, but the unrelieved chronicle of fortitude under arduous trial makes an anti-climax of a conclusion that is hardly more than the cessation of pain—the heroine's return, after the final catastrophe, to the land of her heart's desire. The moral-atrocity stories have drained the reader's capacity for sympathy, and the story, though ably told, is disappointing in proportion to the original degree of interest aroused.

D. B. W.

Contributors

MARQUIS W. CHILDS is now on the staff of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. He formerly did newspaper work in several other Middle Western cities and in New York.

GEORGE YOUNG, English diplomat, is the author of "New Germany," "Egypt," and other books.

HAROLD E. CLURMAN has contributed articles on the theater to various periodicals.

WILLIAM TROY is an instructor at New York University, and one of the editors of The Figure in the Carpet.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED